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PLANNING POST-WAR NALGO

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START RECONSTRUCTION NOW!

R-SIGHTED members everywhere will welcome the decision of the emergency utive last month to set up a NALGO ning Commission which will direct the ights and voice of officers throughout the ntry to the tremendous problems of nstruction which lie ahead. It is a ect which we have long urged upon the ciation in these columns, and which, more ntly, a number of branches, such as ester, and groups of members, have arked upon locally. Now, it is to be n national scope.

he need is clear and urgent. Even before war it was apparent that the structure and anisation of local government, developed hey had been slowly through the centuries, e not ideally adapted to the swiftly chang- needs of modern life, and the demand for reaching changes was being made with wing insistence. The war has thrown a re vivid light on the deficiencies of differing es of authorities, of boundaries that are no re than legal anachronisms, cramping elopment and efficient service, of financial ems that are grossly inequitable, of ministrative methods and procedures that out of touch with the requirements of the . On all sides the cry is rising for drastic orm and reconstruction, not merely when war is over but now.

National Duty

LREADY, from the Government down- wards, many different groups, political, fessional, social, are seeking to crystallise l respond to that demand by forming nning bodies. It is imperative that local vernment officers should play their part— t in isolation, but in close collaboration. ey are the people who have to work the ministrative machine. They, more than ybody else, know what is wanted and what practicable. It is clearly their duty, therefore, the interest of the nation, of the local vernment service, and of themselves, to ke their voices heard.

At the moment, the constitution and terms reference of the projected commission are determined; both are of paramount portance, and the emergency executive was se, we think, in leaving it to a sub-committee, th time for consideration, to submit re- mmendations on the point. This is a task lling for the keenest brains in the service— d we trust that all with any contribution to ake will write to headquarters. It is not sy, in these trying days and more trying hts, for any of us to give detached thought problems of the future. Yet it must be ne, and we know that NALGO members, dividually and collectively, are capable of ing it in a manner that will do credit to m and to the service.

ow Branches Can Help

N excellent example of the way in which individual groups of officers can help this work has been provided during the past months by the Stirling municipal students' circle. This body, composed of all the young men left on the council staff, has met each Wednesday evening throughout the winter and has discussed an astonishing variety of subjects, ranging from council organisation to the law and practice relating to cheques, from the work of an engineer's department to the sources of law. One session was devoted to a discussion of the future of local government.

While the principal objects of the circle, like those of most similar groups, are to deepen the interest of its members in local government, to broaden their outlook, to assist students in their professional examinations, and to encourage them in the art of public speaking, it and others can do much to focus attention and bring out ideas on the problems of reconstruction, and no doubt this will form one of the major topics of study groups and week-end schools in the coming months. Their work will be invaluable to the NALGO Commission.

Beating the Blitz

AFTER the relative calm of the winter, the Luftwaffe has resumed its attacks on our towns and cities with redoubled fury, and London, Coventry, Birmingham, Bristol, Portsmouth, Glasgow, and other areas now have fresh scars to show and fresh tales to tell of the tragedy and heroism of their citizens and the civil defence services. Reports we have received indicate that, on the whole, the failures of the early days of the blitz have been taken to heart, and their lessons learned and applied. The services are working more smoothly and swiftly; shelters are more adequate and better equipped; the victims of bombing are dealt with more efficiently and with greater humanity; repairs are executed with astonishing speed.

Yet there is still no room for complacency—and it is doubtful whether any as yet "unblitzed" area is as fully prepared as it ought to be. Even to-day we hear of tragic examples of inadequacy, of failure to visualise and be ready for the worst that might happen, of confidence that "it won't happen here."

The Lesson of London

SUCH a state of mind is criminal stupidity to-day. We must face the fact that still heavier and more widely-ranging attacks are inevitable, and that no part of the country can regard itself as immune. It would be a useful exercise were every officer engaged in any way with civil defence to read Ritchie Calder's admirable little book, "The Lesson of London" (Secker & Warburg, 2s.). Though it is based on the experience of the first three months of intensive raiding only, and though it is not altogether fair to local government staffs, who are severely condemned for failing to do that which they had no power to do, it does present a vivid and, in our experience, mainly accurate, picture of those terrible days and nights of last September, October, and November.

Sombre as the picture is, with its harrowing details of dangerous and ill-equipped "rest centres," homeless compelled to live for days on a diet of buns and tea, seeking refuge from the nightly rain of bombs in fœtid, mosquito-ridden vaults and arches, wandering painfully from office to office in search of help, waiting for weeks for billets and, when they reached them, being treated like lepers by the local inhabitants, there are brighter aspects. It is necessary only to compare the organisation to-day with that of the first weeks to appreciate the astonishing transformation wrought, as much by enterprising local government officers as by more publicised Cabinet Ministers.

Help—on the Doorstep

TO mention two examples only: Mr. Calder describes how, in one unnamed borough, he personally visited all the offices at which homeless were instructed to call for help. It involved a walk of eight miles! In a neighbouring borough a similar tour covered five miles, and in a third three and a half.

To-day, each of those boroughs will have its central advice and information office at which bomb victims can obtain under one roof all the help they need. One of the best is that at East Ham, opened nearly three months ago. The bureau occupies the entire floor space of a big hall at the municipal offices, which has been partitioned into eight separate rooms. Entering by a special doorway, the visitor is met by a receptionist chosen for tact and skill in human relationships. Normal inquiries are directed to the office they require; people showing distress or in need of special guidance are given a cup of tea and personally conducted to the official they want to see.

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Every inquiry can be dealt with on the spot—casualties, financial assistance, billeting and rehousing, war damage claims, removal of furniture, repairs to houses, shelters, respirators and so on—and in addition to the municipal departments there are offices for the Citizens Advice Bureau and the W.V.S., who can give invaluable "unofficial" help. The bureau can deal with large numbers of people at one time, and most can find the solution of their post-raid problems within half an hour. Where, as sometimes happens immediately after a heavy raid, some waiting is inevitable, there are comfortable chairs and refreshments available.

Here is a transformation indeed from the early days; every town in the country should now have a central war-damage inquiry and assistance bureau of this type.

Shelters Transformed

THE second example of improvement is in shelter conditions. Mr. Calder paints a distressing picture of some of the East End shelters in the early days, and of one in particular where "people queued up from midday, waiting for the gates to open at 4.30 . . . There was practically no sanitary provision, and the filth seeped into blankets or was spread by trampling feet . . . prostitutes paraded . . . hawkers sold clammy fried fish, which cloyed the fug with greasy sickliness . . . The police broke up free fights . . . and children slept."

To-day, that shelter, and many like it, have been, as he admits, "improved out of recognition." Many of the shelters—most, indeed—are still far from ideal, nor will they ever be. But with numbered bunks, no queueing, forced ventilation, proper sanitation, spray disinfection, medical-aid posts, trained nurses, canteens and—in the better ones—regular lectures, cinema shows, talks and even plays, they are palaces by comparison with the horrors they once were. One of the worst of them all, a railway tunnel one and a half miles long in which, at the beginning, ten thousand people sat on the rails, their feet dangling over what was, in effect, a running sewer, has been made comparatively healthy, and undoubtedly happy.

Nevertheless, much remains to be done, and must be done, before London faces another winter of bombing. Local government, no more than any other branch of the war effort, cannot afford to "let up" for a moment.

Studying in the Army

THAT service in the Forces need not lead to mental or professional stagnation has been strikingly demonstrated by at least one N A L G O member, Mr. W. W. Pendrill Lewis, of the borough treasurer's department, Neath, now serving in the Royal Army Pay Corps.

Before he was called up, Mr. Lewis who is 24, was studying for the final examination of the I.M.T.A. He tried to secure deferment of service, but failed. Undeterred by this setback, he continued his studies while in the Army, arranged to take his leave at the time of the examination, and has now passed. Such enterprise and determination should encourage other members who might be tempted to feel that military service will hamper their municipal careers.

Hospitality for Warriors

A GENEROUS personal offer of hospitality for N A L G O members reaches us from Mr. J. Darricotte, well-known to all older members of the association as founder and first chairman of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund.

Mr. Darricotte, who retired some years ago, is now living at Grove House, Grove Lane, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire. "If any N A L G O members happen to be situated as soldiers or airmen near here," he writes, "we shall be pleased to give them hospitality (meals, bath, bed, snooker, table-tennis, etc.) if they will drop me a line or phone when they want to come (Bramhall 306). On most week-ends we have visits from soldiers and airmen who are stationed near, and they enjoy their visits as much as we love to have them."

There must be other members of the association, retired or active, who would be willing to follow Mr. Darricotte's example; if they will write to us we shall be glad to publish their names and addresses.

A complete list of the branches which have offered hospitality to N A L G O warriors is on page 118.

Honour the Dead—Help the Living

AS our monthly Roll of Honour indicates, the ruthless German raids are claiming victims among N A L G O members, with the rest of the civilian population. In such cases their colleagues, independently or collectively through the branch, usually pay a last tribute, generally by sending a wreath to the funeral. Much as this gesture is appreciated by the relatives, we feel that they, and members generally, would commend as an alternative the form of tribute adopted by the Wallasey branch. When one of its members, Mr. Harry Woodcock, was killed recently, the branch secretary wrote to the widow, saying: "No floral tribute was sent to the funeral; the reason being that the sum of one guinea has been transferred from the branch funds to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund—in which Harry was always interested—in memory of our colleague."

We can think of no more appropriate tribute—that the memory of the dead should be recognised through help to the living.

SHARE YOUR JOURNAL

FOR many months, as readers will have recognised, this journal, in common with all other periodicals, has been facing acute difficulties brought about by the restriction of paper supplies. Hitherto, by dint of drastic economies in space, type, and layout, combined with rationing of advertisements, it has been possible to provide a reasonable measure of reading matter; indeed, many numbers of the wartime journal have contained more articles than did its more spacious peace-time predecessor.

After this month, however, the restrictions are to be made even more severe, and we are faced with a bitter alternative. If we continue the policy of providing each member with a personal copy of the journal we shall be able to produce little more than a bare news-sheet. If, on the other hand, we endeavour to produce a journal on the present lines, devoting space to articles of service and professional interest, we shall have to reduce the circulation.

The decision has been no easy one, for there are strong arguments against either course. On balance, however, we think that the second is the better; that members would rather have a journal able to deal adequately with the problems of the day, even if they must share it, than a scrappy summary of association news of which each would receive a personal copy.

Beginning next month, therefore, the circulation will be reduced to 70 per cent of its present figure, and members will be asked, wherever possible, to share their copies with colleagues. This will create many difficulties, we know. But we trust that branch officers will do their best to surmount them and to ensure that every member, at home or in the Forces, has at least an opportunity of reading the journal, even if he may not keep it. Given good will and co-operation, that can be done—and, fortunately, those are qualities on which we can count with confidence in N A L G O.

War Damage Act

WE had hoped this month to provide readers with a simple and understandable summary of the provisions of the War Damage Act as it will affect them, but since certain aspects of the Act's operation are not yet clear, feel that it will be safer to hold the article over. In the meantime, two points are important.

Compensation for chattels—furniture, clothing, and the like—is free up to a maximum of £200 for an unmarried householder, £300 for a man and wife, plus £25 for each child, and £50 for an adult who is not a householder. People whose chattels are not worth more than these maximum amounts need do nothing until damage occurs. Where, however, the value of chattels is greater than these amounts, and the householder wishes to insure them for their full value, he should take out a policy with his insurance company before **May 30.**

Members who have already suffered war damage and filled in Form V.O.W.1 need take no further action. Those who suffer war damage in the future should obtain a copy of Form V.O.W.1 and send it to the district valuer when completed. A new form is being prepared, but until it is ready the former procedure should be followed.

While it is useful to be able to prove, by means of receipts and other documents, the value of property damaged, and every householder should have an inventory of his property, professional valuations are quite unnecessary. At the present time they amount to a waste of money and, more important, of man-power.

Holidays from the Blitz

THE association's scheme for providing rest periods away from blitz and barrage for bomb-weary civil defence workers is now working well, thanks to the co-operation of branches and the generous hospitality of members of N A L G O and of the public fortunate enough to live in relatively safe areas. Up to date, approximately fifty London civil defence workers and their wives, both in and outside the association, have been given holidays, ranging in period from one to three weeks, and letters received at headquarters indicate how keenly they have appreciated the respite.

This, from a district warden working in a heavily bombed London area, who was sent for nine days to Broxton, is typical of many:

> I want to let you know what a wonderful holiday we had. It is beautiful country, and everybody is so friendly; our host was the most generous man I have yet met. "We were not allowed to pay for anything. My wife, who was far from well before we left, astonished everybody in getting fit so quickly. Many thanks from us both to your organization for this grand holiday.

A woman clerk in a London A.R.P. department who went for a week to a Hertfordshire village, wrote:

> The country in Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire has to be seen to be believed, particularly in these days. . . My hostess was most kind and put herself out to give me both a restful and interesting time, bringing my breakfast in bed to me each morning and suggesting various places I might like to go to and how to get to them. . . It was a relief to get away from the barrage and shelter life.

Although many offers of hospitality have been received, many more are needed, especially near London, if all those in need of rest and recuperation are to be helped. We trust, therefore, that members who have the good fortune to live in safe areas will do what they can in this way to assist their colleagues working in the "front line."

Bolton's Appeal

AS we recorded last month, Bolton Corporation has decided to appeal against the decision of the High Court rejecting its application for an order prohibiting the National Arbitration Tribunal from adjudicating on the dispute between it and N A L G O, over its failure to make up war service pay. The appeal is unlikely to be heard before the middle of this month.

PLANNING THE POST-WAR NALGO

E article by "Critic" on "What is wrong with NALGO," which ap-ed in our February number, fully de-s the attention which it is receiving from ers. His reply to the clichés which some-s pass as representative criticism left ing more to be said. His analysis of the ciation's real defects, and his remedial estions, call for discussion in every re-nsible quarter. We feel that we ourselves ld not be responding adequately to edi-al responsibilities if we failed to discuss here. In doing so, we can express no ude which is "official." There is, indeed, "official" attitude to them as yet; we k, then, editorially but not ex-cathedra! o those most closely bound up with the ciation's affairs, and who can think cally, knowledgeably, and constructively its activity and aims, it will be as important nark what Critic did not, as what he did, fault with; and it is a striking fact that found no fault with the association's cy. Wide agreement upon a policy o proof that it is sound, but it is at any strong support for such a belief—the re so if the policy is agreed upon by an torate as diverse in position, in contacts, , externally, in outlook, as the members NALGO. The association's policy is questionably founded on wide agreement. nferences have not revealed any major tvages among the rank and file for a long e past; and the policies of the council e won approval to a remarkable degree recent years. As we said in commenting last year's delegate meeting: "There is present a unity in the association which founded, not merely on a subordination differences, but on something very close identity of view." With one possible eption—to which we shall refer later—defects on which Critic fastens are ects in machinery; and it is to the improve-nt of machinery that he directs his own nd.

anch Discipline

Dealing with his topics in his own order, l first, therefore, with branch autonomy, think that a solution can quickly be found hout much controversy if it is realised t the question is one of degree, and that ther Critic or anyone else advocates a mplete supersession of branch powers. The many local and individual factors ich determine service conditions in each ea make branch organisation essential in an sociation such as ours, and justify a con-derable degree of branch power and dis-tion. Mr. David dealt with this problem der the heading: "Too much uniformity evil," but argued from a different angle. ou cannot hope to regiment your branches, said in effect, and aptly quoted Burke's lebrated passage noticing how even so bitrary a power as the Sultan was con-ained to a prudent relaxation of central wer in all his borders. We think, neverthe-ss, and imagine Burke would agree, that the ltan would claim and secure the dominance the central power in, say, national defence. he State either maintains its authority in atters of that kind or ceases to be the State. milarly, the association must have the right override the branches in enforcing a principle the kind which the association exists to aintain, such as minimum trade union andards for the defence of all members, e maintenance of which is part of its agreed olicy. No one seeks to go beyond that; d we think most members are ready to go far.

Critic's observations on the district com-ittees are particularly valuable. Theirs is a le of special importance when central achinery is slowed down and conferences cannot be held; and we think the council would like us to emphasise its unquestioned recognition of this fact. The district committees can go far in keeping the governance of the association responsive to the feeling and control of the members, while at the same time ensuring that the activities of the council are understood. In emphasising the importance of their rôle, Critic has obviously, however, looked beyond war-time circumstances. His conception of that rôle is not altogether new; but he performed a signal service in throwing its essentials into such clear relief. His description of the district committee as "the two-way co-ordinating channel" and "the force which makes national policy local and local policy national" should profitably focus our attention on requirements that will always have to be met in the governance of an association as large and complex as ours has grown to be; and should lead us to realise, not only that there must be appropriate machinery to meet these requirements, but that the appropriate machinery can only be that of the district committees. Once this is understood, our members can be relied upon to see that the district committees equip themselves for the work by developing their organisation and procedure. Some of them have already gone far in this direction; possessing active executive committees which in turn are highly organised in sub-committees. It may come as a shock to members of such district committees to learn that what they may have thought a method of working general to all, is not in fact so. As Critic has discovered, not only do standards vary enormously in this respect, but there are districts whose activity has as yet hardly passed beyond a quarterly assembly of branch representatives.

An N.E.C. Cabinet?

The next topic discussed by Critic was perhaps the most important of all—the structure and functioning of the council. Many members of that body have been as conscious as Critic is of its defects. Its efficiency is inevitably impaired, as is that of a local authority, by the burden of a vast amount of executive detail which absorbs the necessarily limited time and meeting of its members, and precludes that concentration on policy and planning which ought to be its main concern; and by the absence of any arrangement which ensures the application of a unified direction and co-ordinating force upon all activities. It cannot, of course, be assumed that the responsibility for these deficiencies lies with the council—past or present—or that the cure is entirely in its hands as a domestic concern. If defects flow from the council's constitution, they can be remedied only by the association; though doubtless the council, if it is convinced that this is so, should boldly tell the association and ask it to approve the necessary alterations.

Critic describes the present council of 52 as unwieldy, and marks its tendency to confirm policy rather than evolve it. Both statements must be read in relation to one's conception of its functions, as Critic himself impliedly recognises in the suggestion he goes on to make for a council cabinet. *As a council*, it is certainly too unwieldy to deal primarily with the whole range of business. But could it, even if drastically reduced in size, ever do otherwise, as a part-time body, than confirm policy rather than formulate it; and is it necessary that it should do more, so long as "confirm" is understood to imply "control," as it must be? There is no cure in a mere reduction of size, so long as the council as such must be responsible for the whole range of central administration. It must find the cure in equipping itself with the most appropriate organs; and these, as in any other large and highly developed organisation, must be differentiated according to function.

The problem is, of course, not solved when that is recognised; it only then becomes possible of solution. And the recognition is one that implies the abandonment of many rooted pre-conceptions. It implies acceptance of the view that members of the council cannot all have an identical function, that matters are not necessarily more wisely or justly settled because each one of 52 members had a first-hand part in settling them; in a word, that a large association cannot be run on the lines of a parish council.

Does not the existing committee system adequately provide the organism necessary? We think not, because it fails, like the constitution of local authorities, to provide organs for unified direction and planning, and in particular because it fails to recognise that planning cannot be departmentalised among committees, or on the other hand left to a council of 52 meeting at long intervals for a short time.

Planning Policy

Critic's suggestion for a cabinet would ordinarily imply the one body for unified executive direction, and also for initiative in planning. It is a sound and feasible plan in many cases, but in some circumstances and for a body whose time is limited, each function may turn out to militate against the other. Critic may, however, have in mind not a cabinet in the full sense, but rather a new policy committee, with power to prepare programmes for committee consideration. Some four or five years ago the council did in fact set up a committee similar at any rate in name. We understand that views were divided on the success of the experiment. Whether the committee was intended to meet special problems arising at that time, or to be a permanent organ, may not be clear; if the latter, it was unfortunate that it was set up without a fuller articulation of its relations with the standing committees. That it did useful work, few members of the council would deny. Curiously enough, it appears to have done much more in overhauling machinery than it did in planning policy. None of the characteristic policies which emerged about that time—the service conditions policy, the public relations policy, and the drive for Whitleyism—seem to have emanated from it, but from the committees concerned. There was new personnel on the council at that time, and a general circulation of new ideas; perhaps the committee was content to let these have their play in existing channels. It would be wrong, however, to discountenance Critic's suggestion merely because an experiment made some time ago of a similar kind did not prove as successful as everyone hoped. The need then was not so great, the atmosphere different, and the committee may well have failed to take the place that some had hoped it would do, because its rôle was insufficiently understood and too loosely designed. The diagnosis of existing defects and the choice of the right remedies will take long and patient investigation, and many more pages to expound and express than are available here. We trust that the council will not neglect, however, to undertake the task and will be ready with concrete proposals for application as soon as peace comes.

Critic's call for more organisers and for the increased financial support which this and his associated suggestions would necessarily demand from the membership as a whole, must, we think, be met. The association can obviously not rely in future on the services of branch officers to the extent that it has done in the past. Successful service conditions work, in which issues arise so suddenly and call for such urgent response, must obviously depend

(Continued on next page.)

What is Wrong with NALGO?

On this and the two following pages we publish a further selection of comments received from readers on the article by "Critic" published in the March Journal.

WE MUST CONSOLIDATE NOW!

From NORMAN H. ROGERS, secretary of the Croydon branch.

"CRITIC" finds a weakness in NALGO when he states that, while it can reach decisions, adopt policies, and prepare programmes, it cannot effectively ensure that these decisions, policies and programmes are carried out. H. Townshend-Rose pertinently remarks that, as a trade union, NALGO has yet to be welded into an effective instrument of bargaining. Jack Hill urges that policies, after being endorsed, must be put into effect. W. G. David asks whether branches must always wait upon the pace of those which are slowest and most indifferent to their own welfare, whilst W. Barker insists that local autonomy must persist. In short, it is clearly indicated, and I agree entirely, that NALGO, as a trade union, is today a relatively ineffective organisation. Generally, as "Critic" so accurately points out, individual members depend more upon the success of local negotiations conducted by their branches than on any action taken by the N.E.C.

There is no doubt that, in the past, to the average member or branch executive man, the N.E.C. has been a rather nebulous body—presumably appointed for some constitutional reason or possibly to act as an "Aunt Sally" sideshow for verbal shies at Whitsuntide, one of those jolly diversions of annual conference. From the March and April numbers of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, we seem to have awakened to the fact that, at previous conferences, from the service conditions and salaries aspect, we have been building fancy sand castles at Aberdeen, Blackpool, and Torquay instead of manufacturing strong concrete defence blocks of trade unionism.

What are we going to do about it? "Critic" suggests that we cannot do anything drastic to save the situation because action which might have far-reaching consequences for the association can only properly be decided by a majority vote of all members. This, today, is impossible because of members serving in the Forces. Other writers, including "Critic," talk vaguely about planning and reconstruction in the future. Jack Hill gets nearer the mark when he says that "reform and reconstruction must come, and the sooner the better."

One more comment before I attempt to suggest an immediate solution of the problem. There is "Critic's" indictment of branches. Let us face facts. A member joins NALGO; he pays his subscription and expects a service—a trade union service. He does not pay his subscription for the doubtful privilege of being personally involved in tackling service problems or carrying out campaigns. If he is a capable man, he is not greatly concerned with salary scales and so forth. His own qualifications set his value. Hence, qualified and higher-paid officers tend to rest lightly on NALGO. It is the "rank and file" of the membership which needs its help. And, in fact, those members of the "rank and file" are in the least advantageous position to press NALGO policies. They are easy prey for the "dominating officers" and the exponents of the policy of maintaining "happy relations" quoted by "Critic." Hence, any foundations for a structurally strong NALGO trade union require an ingredient which will offset the weaknesses mentioned.

"Critic" is beating the air when he criticises branch organisation—which, incidentally, is likely to disintegrate when it should be most firm owing to the loss of useful branch officers to the Forces. Of course, branch meetings will melt away when questions of national policy are on the agenda. The importance of such questions has never been forced home until the acute problems of today have arisen. How many members of any executive are prepared to risk a fall from favour in the eyes of a senior officer or the local council in disturbing "happy relations"? Careers, wives, and families have to be considered. And that, indeed, is a powerful drawback to NALGO progress. Few of the best brains in the municipal world will dabble in the association's work. Mostly, it is in the hands of a few who are, by nature, endowed with consideration for the welfare of their colleagues (if they were not active in NALGO, they would probably be preaching some other gospel elsewhere); and a number of others who allow themselves to be elected departmental representatives.

If NALGO is to act as a trade union (and if it is not, then there is no point in developing the argument), certain steps must be taken immediately. These steps should be taken irrespective of whether NALGO does or does not affiliate with the T.U.C. John Robson thinks it can reach its goal alone, and I am inclined to agree with him, provided, however, it sets about its re-organisation at once. "After the war" will be too late; there will be problems of such magnitude then that those of NALGO will receive scant attention. It must consolidate its position today; the urgency of the situation cannot be over-emphasised. It is now or never, and the planning and technique required to meet immediate needs must be sufficiently broad-minded and imaginative to be equally suitable for the association's peacetime progress.

My first suggestion towards a solution of the problem goes some way to meet the clamourings of the democrats. It is that a commission of competent constructive critics of the N.E.C. should be set up. "Critic's" suggestion that the districts should appoint policy sub-committees meets the point to some extent, but does not go far enough. A commission of, say, ten of the association's saner critics, men with imagination and a facility for realising the exigencies of the present peculiar circumstances, should be nominated in each district. These commissions should sit at once and take evidence from any witnesses deemed suitable or from individual members who may have sound contributions to make.

The aims of the "commissioners" should be to find the best brains in NALGO and milk them for ideas. From these the cream should then be skimmed; after a reasonable period (not longer than, say, three months), the various commissioners should present their findings to a final national commission. If no really good and effective suggestions can be made for the betterment of NALGO, all further criticism of the actions and policy of the N.E.C. should cease.

My second suggestion meets the complaint that the N.E.C. cannot get branches to adopt national policy. The public relations programme, now only "ticking over," should be reviewed and temporarily remodelled as an internal or "private" relations programme between the N.E.C. and the branches. Much in the same way that the work and purpose of a local authority is little understood by the average ratepayer, the work and purpose of the N.E.C. is only vaguely understood by the average member of NALGO or executive man. For instance, it doesn't sound sense when it is announced that the N.E.C. has obtained a second increase in the Whitley council cost of living bonus award whilst nearly 700 local authorities are still withholding the first. "Branch apathy" is hardly a sufficient excuse for a good trade union to put forward.

My third suggestion, already voiced tentatively by L. G. Copus, meets the criticism of branch ineffectiveness. More organisers *are* essential. I would propose a paid branch secretary for each branch, or group of branches—say, one paid organiser for every thousand members. That is an approximate figure, but the principle remains. Branches must have some *power* instilled into them. They must not be directed or coerced by any influence save that of NALGO. At present, regional officers and divisional secretaries have not the time to devote to supporting all NALGO battles at the local spearpoints of attack. It is not surprising if some of the association's outposts are overcome or fail to make the grade. Apathy on the part of some branches must not be allowed to leave the ordinary membership in a relatively disadvantageous position. It is no good for the N.E.C. to criticise those branches which take independent lines of action unless the N.E.C. is prepared to bring up big guns in support of its national policy sufficient to ensure complete and speedy success. The association must mobilise an army of organisers, at once—not after the war.

Obviously, war needs call for stern financial measures. The answer is a levy on subscriptions. The association's constitution permits of this. A national policy of weekly or monthly deductions of subscriptions from salaries, similar to that adopted for the collection of income tax, would greatly mitigate any hardships arising from the increase.

Whilst these ideas are not original, it is obvious that, for a successful cure for NALGO's afflictions, something along these lines is essential. The membership must, war or no war, still direct the association's policy, and the commission should effect this. The N.E.C. must seek a method by which it can make its national policy effective—a live "internal" relations programme together with ideas and schemes submitted by the final commission, might help to achieve this. The branch, as converter of national policy into local practice, must be strengthened and supported—more organisers will do this. But, and again the emphasis, action must be taken *now*.

(Continued from page 99)

on close, frequent, and speedy contact between branches and organisers. It was unfortunate that the introduction of the new regional plan for organising staff coincided with the onset of war conditions which made communications so difficult, for the first postulate of such a plan is the availability of steady communications. If organising staff is now disposed in regional pools it is the more important that the pools should be adequate.

Critic's final suggestion for a NALGO Commission on Local Government, now adopted by the emergency executive, is a subject we shall deal with in a later issue. The establishment of such a body will represent not so much a new policy as the development of an existing one. That the association should make its voice heard on administrative aspects of local government was an aim fully recognised as part of the public relations policy; and these pages witness to the application of this part of the policy in many instances where we felt we could represent a service view. It will be well worth while to consider whether the association can speak with one voice on some of the larger questions that, as is now clear, are bound to find a solution in the earliest post-war stages, which must attract the public-spirited concern of our members as citizens and which may vitally affect them as local government officers

WE MUST SHED OUR COMPLACENCY

From J. SHORT, public relations correspondent, Gateshead branch.

AN anyone who has tried to put, from the floor of conference, a point of view osed to N.E.C. policy think otherwise than the N.E.C. is autocratic? Further, the varication and deliberate waste of time over ters of secondary importance is deplorable. pates on organisational points are deliber- y discouraged. To talk of training and ulating the younger members is just so much ukum, for little chance is given to anyone do so; they might steal the thunder from N.E.C. orators.

ndividual members of the N.E.C. are ted, not because they are most fitted for t job, but, usually because they are members a big branch, and their nearness to other nches gives a familiar ring to their names. t 20 per cent of the members vote upon the rits of the individual candidate; they are uenced by the proximity of the candidate their own local authority. This is the main son that the election is a foregone con- sion.

The endorsement by conference of N.E.C. icy year after year is explained by the fact t the outlook of the local government icer is different from that of the ordinary rker, in so far as he claims to be a member what is called the lower middle class. This usion of his position, and his further delusion security, make the conference delegate at his visit more as a holiday than as a job work. He is, therefore, inclined to betray trust of his members, in so far as his keen- ss is not in the interests of his organisation, taking the easy way out, and thinking the E.C. is always right.

We tend to lay too much stress on our unger members and on training and stimu- ing them. Facilities for this should always there—yet we must realize that it is not in twenties that a member becomes fully nscious of NALGO, but perhaps in the rties and fifties. The young man, if he does ake the effort, is one of two sorts—the gnacious type, or the quiet, sit-still-and- bibe-the-wisdom-of-your-elders type. We e, therefore, compelled to have our executive ficers from middle-aged people.

Why is affiliation to the T.U.C. a more serious question for NALGO than others? Are we not just a body of men and women doing a job of work? If so, and having discovered it is necessary to organise into an association to further our economic rights, surely it is logical to take the further step and associate with others who are organized to preserve those rights.

To argue that affiliation on the one hand would create a desire to contribute to the funds of the Conservative party on the other is just bunkum. This is already being done by many members of NALGO in all political parties—some even subscribe to the Communist party. So let us face the political and economic issues that would be involved, and be good democrats, whichever way the issue goes.

There will always be apathy and indifference in the branches in such a loosely knit organisation as NALGO. Efforts to interest members with various side lines have, in the main, failed hopelessly. What is necessary is a closer knitting together of the organisation and a greater measure of discipline amongst the rank and file. To accuse the branches of sabotage when 90 per cent of their members are unconscious of their duty, is just ridiculous. A somnabulist cannot be an efficient saboteur. Educate them first in their responsibilities, and accuse them afterwards if they fail us.

My experience of district committee meetings is not a pleasant one, but perhaps I expect too much. They are not held often enough, and too much time is wasted on unessential matters. Most delegates go with the idea of spending a pleasant Saturday afternoon, others merely go "for the ride."

If the district committee were really a link between the N.E.C. and the branches, it could work wonders. The N.E.C. is, of course, largely to blame for the adolescent way in which the district committees work: it has itself little or no organization in the districts—a dozen organizing secretaries to cover the British Isles, no office accommodation where a district executive could assemble, just the old Town Hall or someone's office, anything for nothing being our motto. A real edifice would be built up upon a good district office in much smaller districts, and more district organising secretaries. Other organisations have them; why not NALGO?

We do not want shoddy or cheap organisation, we want good organisation, so let us make up our minds to pay for it and see that we get it. Let us shed our complacency and build an organisation worthy of our calling.

GIVE EACH RANK & GRADE A VOICE

From Miss A. D. BAXTER, Lanarkshire.

NALGO'S weakness is basal. It is difficult to weld into a strong union members holding varied professional and financial interests and having divergent qualifications and abilities. This is evident in criticism in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, at conferences, and at branch meetings. Suspicion rises from the lower ranks, condescension drips coldly on enthusiasm. Equality and mutual respect are lacking at meetings which are truly representative. True representation is lacking at meetings of equals in rank.

Again, enthusiasm is a variable quantity, at its highest in ambitious married men, at its lowest amongst young women. The reformers lose patience with the apathetic, who distrust them.

All unions have to cope with varying degrees of ability and energy in their members. The custom of local authorities, in offering security of tenure, and often recruiting their staffs without entry examinations from ratepayers or their sons and daughters, presents NALGO with the problem of backwaters of the contented surrounded by torrents of the dissatisfied.

Subdivision into grades accentuates differences in rank. However, local government officers of all ranks have in common an interest in public service, a desire to further the common weal. Emphasis on this suggests that the principal committee of the association, the district committees, and the branches, should be fully representative and concerned with policy and the service. Propaganda amongst members and public relations would be its tools. Committees representative only of the ranks interested should deal with salaries and service conditions. These committees would be guided by the policy of the principal committee and their debates would indicate their sentiments to that committee.

Already, controversies arising out of the scope offered to women by war conditions are sharpening their enthusiasm for trade unionism. Their interests appear to clash with those of their male colleagues. To obviate discord, the principal committee should, by propaganda, promote serious consideration of the relations between equal pay for equal work and family allowances and of similar social problems, thereby clearing the air through frank and intelligent discussion and promoting interest, not only in matters affecting the public social services but in the association's efforts to grapple with new problems.

The ancillaries play an important part in dealing with NALGO's third especial difficulty. Education, providence, and insurance encourage mobility of staff—provided there is opportunity to move. Here I suggest that national conditions of entry to and promotion within the service should not lag behind national salary scales.

In summary, the association will continue to be weak so long as it attempts to focus simultaneously on several groups moving at different speeds in different directions. Let it be, instead, a focusing point to project thought outward and pour ideas inward, and let its powers be such that each group will tread the path it chooses.

WHERE DISTRICTS HAVE FAILED

From H. LANGFORD, secretary, Essex C.C. branch.

THE branches themselves must not be held entirely to blame for the extent of utonomous and independent action of which Critic" complains. Branch autonomy nd the lack of organisers are closely linked; n increase in the latter would result in a iminution of the former. We have always een well behind the "unions" in the number f paid organisers. NALGO has, rightly r wrongly, preferred to have as many honorary fficers and as few paid officials as possible. here is some merit in this, but it unquestionbly tends towards local autonomy and ndependent and inconsistent action (or naction) by individual branches. If repreentations to employing authorities on all najor questions were made directly by NALGO staff we should at least have onsistency.

Critic suggests at least one full-time rganiser for each 5,000 members; in my pinion there should be at least one full-time rganiser to each district committee (and he hould be the secretary of the committee).

agree, too, with Critic in thinking that he district committees are not the forces they ught to be. In fact if I were asked to answer n one sentence the question: "What is rong with NALGO?" I should reply: "The district committees!" They meet too nfrequently, have little or no authority over he branches, do not materially assist in the formulation or carrying out of "policy," and are not in any real sense a connecting link or stepping stone from branch to N.E.C.

How far would affiliation to the T.U.C. help NALGO? I have never been an advocate of affiliation, and still have an open mind on the subject, but there is one aspect which has struck me more than once during my branch secretaryship; I often wonder whether, by remaining aloof, we do not fall between two stools. On the various local authorities we generally find two diametrically opposed factions: on the one hand, the members who dislike trade unionism in any form amongst their staff and on the other the "labour" members. The anti-trade unionists regard us as a trade union, whilst the trade-unionists despise us because we refuse to affiliate.

I cannot follow Critic's reasoning when he says that demand for the preservation of democratic rights inside NALGO is inconsistent with the request for affiliation with the T.U.C.; neither can I share his view that, because most members of the N.E.C. have in the past been re-elected, and would probably be re-elected again, there is no reason to hold an election this year. He seems to be a little off the rails, too, in regard to conference; surely it is the job of conference to *frame* the association's policy, which the N.E.C. is to carry out—not merely to endorse or reject policy formulated by the N.E.C.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SOLIDARITY

From T. J. METCALFE, secretary of the Brighton branch.

"CRITIC'S" article was meat to my liking. His review was comprehensive and criticism fair. Only in one direction did he pull his punches. A small but vociferous section of our members have conveniently short memories. They never give credit to NALGO for the vast improvements in working conditions, hours, holidays, salaries, sick pay, superannuation, compensation, enhancement of status, and the like during the past quarter of a century. For my part, I would diagnose any malady from which NALGO is alleged to be suffering as sporadic neurosis—confined to those members whose parrot cry has always been "What do I get out of NALGO?" I wish "Critic" had hit these folk a lot harder—believe me, I never lose an opportunity to do so, and they deserve it.

Any suggestions I can make for a more efficient working of the association's machinery are merely elaborations of the points he has so convincingly made.

I consider that an increase in the number of paid officers of NALGO is long overdue. We are not fair to our employees; we who are always so critical of our own employers. The size of the areas covered by our regional and divisional officers is so enormous that they are prevented from maintaining that personal contact with branches which is so essential. The divisional areas, or the number of officers within those areas, should be increased to admit of the regular attendance of a divisional officer at branch meetings. There is nothing more stimulating to branch enthusiasm, as I can testify from experience of the trying days we have gone through in Brighton. Another aspect of this suggestion is that branch officers are frequently and unjustifiably suspected of "selling the pass" to enhance personal prestige. How often one hears the cry that branches are run by a small clique! If informal and open meetings were held regularly, whereat the divisional officer could receive progress reports, listen to the grousers, and outline future policy, we would unquestionably attain a greater solidarity.

The answer may be made that we cannot afford this improvement. If the proposal has the merit I think it has, then we must afford it. Increase the subscriptions to cover not only this cost but also the cost of a NALGO planning commission—a first-rate idea.

I would like to see more uniformity of action between neighbouring branches. It is regrettable that branches sometimes use their autonomous powers to conciliate on low standards of salary or service conditions and then neighbouring councils use the agreement as justification for depressing the conditions of their own employees. The only adequate defence here is Whitleyism. Branches whose local authorities are still outside the Whitley machine should do all in their power to remedy this weakness.

Apart from that, I would like to see more opportunities for informal discussions between the secretaries and chairmen of contiguous branches. Such meetings might form a useful adjunct to district assembles and would afford opportunity for free discussion, not possible in the formal atmosphere of the committee itself. This would lead to an appreciation of difficulties which, whilst apparently local at the outset, might prejudicially affect officers in a very large area.

In concluding, I would like to reply to the query "What is wrong with NALGO" with "Nowt much."

TO CONTRIBUTORS

The resumption of heavy air attacks on London has increased the risk that "copy" for "Local Government Service" may be destroyed before it is printed. To minimise this danger, contributors are asked, wherever possible, to send their contributions in duplicate.

MR. V. GRAINGER

MEMBERS throughout the north-eastern district and many more throughout the country will have read with regret of the resignation from the N.E.C. of Mr. V. Grainger on his appointment as chief cashier at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Mr. Grainger was first elected to the N.E.C. nine years ago. For many years he was secretary of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne branch, whilst his district committee membership dates back to the days of the old North East district committee, which served the combined area of the present Yorkshire and North Eastern districts. He was appointed secretary of the district committee 16 years years ago and has rendered sterling service in that capacity, visiting most of the branches in the district and readily giving advice, assistance and co-operation.

His main interest has been in service conditions. A firm believer in Whitleyism, he has been a member of the North Eastern joint council since its inception, and was an enthusiastic member of the sub-committee of the N.E.C. which was responsible for conducting the national salaries campaign.

His outstanding services to the association will be recognised by a presentation which is to be made to him at the next meeting of the North Eastern district committee.

GIVE MORE MEMBERS A NALGO JOB

From W. J. TURNER, secretary of the Hampstead branch.

THERE can be little wrong with NALGO if the criticisms and suggested improvements mentioned by "Critic" are all that someone with exceptional opportunities for taking a detached view of the association can put forward.

The Nazi student is informed by Critic that "Readers' Forum" would provide a wealth of spicy reading, yet we read later on that, in Critic's opinion, most of the criticisms in "Readers' Forum" have been trivial and superficial. Upon this evidence—i.e. trivial and superficial criticisms of a few members and branches, as Critic points out, the association is condemned as effete, decadent, and demoralised.

We are told that, as the N.E.C. is compelled to appeal to branches for support of its policies (some of which Critic admits are weak and ineffective) and has no authority to require their execution (in 1939 and 1940, however, we are told that authority was given to the council to override a branch which refuses to help itself), so long will the association as a whole fall short of its fullest influence. And yet our student will report that the association is ruled by an "arbitrary and autocratic" N.E.C.—powerless and yet autocratic.

The N.E.C. has submitted its recommendations against affiliation to branches for endorsement *or rejection*, and would deserve all the brickbats flung at it were it to have taken any other course. Branches to have power to reject—I gathered that the N.E.C. should be given power to compel branches to adopt its policies.

Critic states that all that an election or conference could do can still be done, no less democratically, through the machinery of district committees. He also expresses the view that most district committees are unreal bodies, too big to thrash out and develop policy, too small in influence and authority to secure acceptance of their decisions.

I agree that the scale of subscriptions should be altered, but can our subscriptions be compared with those of the trade unions of manual workers? Do not other trade union contributions cover such items as strike pay and sickness benefits? What is the definition of a trade union—"a permanent association of workers for the purpose of maintaining and improving the economic status of its members," or "an association of wage-earners for the purpose of maintaining and improving wages, the standard of living and conditions of work"? NALGO satisfies these definitions, and only recently we have received particulars of the Leicester branch's planning and advisory committee, together with an appeal to other branches to do something on similar lines. But can it really be said that NALGO concerns itself scarcely at all with local government itself—the machine we serve? I do not think so.

NALGO could be developed if care were taken to prevent one member from being on too many committees. Chief officers are asked to be the presidents of activities in which they have not the slightest interest, and it will often be found that one senior officer is the president of several different branches of the association's activities. How can one person possibly give his best if he is called upon to do so much. Split the "offices" up amongst more members; see that the membership of committees is widespread; there will then be fewer absentees from meetings, and more persons to do the work.

PROBLEM OF THE CHIEF OFFICER

From M. J. MILES, editor of "Camera Principis," Coventry branch magazine.

AS "Critic" points out, our claim that NALGO represents 120,000 officers is false. One often hears, for instance, that our great weakness is the inclusion in our membership of senior and chief officials.

It is idle to suggest that all chief officials welcome NALGO's purely trade union activities. These officials have been represented as the "haves," whose "status quo" may be jeopardised by the clamourings of the "have-nots." Again, one hears of the chief officer who "can run his own department without the interference of NALGO."

"Critic" suggests that subscriptions of higher-paid members could be increased. I suggest that it is just these members who have the least use for NALGO, apart from its ancillaries. Yet, on the other hand, most of our most powerful members come from this class. They are, of course, like Caesar's wife.

The position of chief officers is, admittedly, a delicate one. In certain circumstances, easily visualised, their position as good trade unionists would be practically intolerable. To deny this is to be blind to the fact that chief officers do not merely carry out the wishes of their authority, but also initiate policy which is debated and amended or approved. The voices of chief officers will be heard particularly on questions of salaries and service conditions! Verb sap!

What is the solution? The exclusion of chief officers? I imagine that most of the members of "Critic's" planning commission, which I heartily support, would be chief officers. Can we have it both ways?

The man who brought his time bomb to the Town Hall.

SCRAP ALL YOUR AUTHORITIES!

es NORMAN F. E. BROWNING, D.P.A. (Lond.), F.C.C.S., F.R.V.A., chief ncial officer and deputy clerk to the Sheppey R.D.C., in this article calling for two w types of council, paid councillors, a municipal civil service, and rating reform.

OCAL government reform is going to be in the forefront of public discussion when drive for reconstruction starts at the end of war, and it is essential, therefore, that local ernment officers should be considering it, bite the pressure of their work to-day. They better able than anyone else to examine defects of the present system and to suggest rovements provided that, in doing so, they the interests of the community first.

o Types of Authority

The present conglomeration of authorities one source of the evils besetting local ernment to-day. Not only are their efforts inly unco-ordinated, but they are often able to carry out effectively their functions ause of faulty areas and inadequate financial ources. Only an Englishman would tolerate fixing of municipal boundaries to run down middle of important streets, or the grant the same powers to an authority with a few usand pounds income as to an authority ose income passes the million pound mark. To my mind, it is useless to try to remould d reform the present authorities. Local nity and that obstacle of so much proposed orm, vested interest, would prevent the ecution of any effective scheme. Therefore, suggest that all the present authorities ould be swept away, and that in their place ould be established two types of authority lly—regional authorities and minor local. The area of the regional authority would ed fixing with care. It must be large enough, th in area and resources, for it to carry out its functions in the most economic manner, d at the same time it must be small enough enable its members to have adequate general ough not necessarily detailed) local knowlge. Similar considerations would apply in ing the areas of the minor authorities. The division of functions between the two es of authority should not present insuperable difficulties. These functions must include all those now divided between private and public enterprise, such as electricity and water supplies and public transport.

There would be central control of the regional authorities but, because of their size and importance, it would be a much less exacting control than that at present imposed on county and county borough councils. In fact, it would be reasonable to expect the new authorities to be given a degree of autonomy, including minor legislative powers, not possessed by any present-day authority. The minor authorities would be controlled by the regional authority, but this control should not be a directive one. Rather, it should be a co-ordinating control, aimed at ensuring administrative harmony throughout the region.

Besides their own function, the minor authorities might be entrusted with the management of certain regional functions within their areas. If this happened, then the minor authorities must be given a good deal of discretion within the broad lines of policy which would be laid down.

Councillors Should be Paid

The regional authorities would be governed by relatively small elected councils, the region being divided into areas, each electing one representative who would hold office for two years.

If the regions are to be governed by the councillors and not by the officials, then, because of the amount of the work involved, the councillors must be paid, and it would be a condition of their remaining in office that they give their whole time to their work.

In place of the present system of committees, I would have an organisation similar to that of the central government. Each councillor would be assigned to a department and, for as long as he remained in office, he would be the political head of that department. The work of the departments would be co-ordinated by the chairman of the council, who would be free of all departmental responsibility.

Besides acting as the head of his particular department, each member would be responsible to the council for the general supervision of the minor authorities within his area.

The minor authorities would have councils and committees on the same lines as at present, save that, to avoid unwieldy bodies, the number of members would not exceed 24.

Such extensive reforms as I have envisaged could not come about without a general reform of government as a whole; therefore, to enhance the standing of the regional and minor authorities and to attract the best persons to them, I would lay down that, after a fixed date, no person who had not already been a regional councillor would be eligible as a candidate unless he had previously served on a minor council, and later, that no person who had not been a member of parliament would be eligible to stand as a parliamentary candidate unless he had previously served as a regional councillor.

Finding the Best Officers

The regional council would be responsible for the recruitment of all officers within its area, the minor authorities being allowed to select from a short list submitted by the region.

In the main, candidates would be subject to similar conditions of examination and selection as are now applied by the Civil Service Commissioners. In addition, however, provision would be made for the recruitment of suitable men from outside the local government service and for the promotion of suitable juniors to the highest grades. Salaries and service conditions would be settled by regional Whitley councils.

Solving the Finance Problem

Undoubtedly, the rating system is archaic, full of anomalies and inequalities. The difficulties of finding an alternative means of raising local revenues are immense, though I hope that they will not prove insurmountable, for without some system of local taxation, true local government is impossible.

Many of the difficulties in the distribution of grants-in-aid would disappear with the enlargement of areas of the major local authorities, for it should not be impossible so to arrange the regional areas as to ensure that each has approximately equal resources.

Bearing in mind the claims of those who advocate a local income tax and the rating of site values, I would suggest that the future finances of local government might be settled on the following lines:

In place of existing grants, there should be raised, as an addition to the national income tax, an item for local government needs. This item would be designed to cover the minimum requirements of local government throughout the country and would be fixed by a joint body of Treasury and regional council representatives. The distribution of the proceeds of the tax, both to the regional councils and to the minor local authorities, would be on a "per capita" basis.

Any additional sums needed would be raised by the minor local authorities by means of a reformed rating system, the regional councils precepting much as the county councils do today. This reformed rating system would include provisions for the relief of the poorer members of the community by granting scale allowances for small incomes and large families.

These proposals are inevitably very sketchy and no doubt many criticisms of them can be made. I do feel, however, that unless local government is drastically overhauled and simplified, it will be incapable of playing its part in the future, and it will be replaced by a system which will be nothing less than government locally by the representatives of the central government.

THE RATE-CLERK'S NIGHTMARE!

Since this article by R. I. MARTIN was written, Coventry has had two more severe raids which have largely nullified the inquiry it describes, and created another, and worse, nightmare for the harassed rating staff.

AFTER the big Coventry raid of November 14 last year, we of the rates staff would have welcomed a fortnight's grace to restore our mental balance. But the public thought otherwise and, for weeks, the inquiry-counter was besieged by queues of ratepayers anxious to inform us that they were "bombed out" and asking for an extension of their precious discount date.

Masses of data and temporary addresses were compiled, the sight of which was sufficient to create a feeling of dejection among the cold and harassed rate-clerks. The fact that, while thousands of rate demands had been served, thousands more had been destroyed before despatch, made things difficult enough, and the confusion was increased by the almost daily applications for refunds by those who had lost their homes.

Slowly, we pulled ourselves together, and, with the restoration of light and heat, got down to the problem. A quick survey of the rated properties was needed, as a basis for our future rate demands, and this task was given to the valuation and rating staffs combined, leaving only a few members in the office to deal with correspondence and inquiries.

Essential rate data was copied into duplicate folio books, analysed into columns under such headings as "demolished"; "seriously damaged and vacated"; "slightly damaged and occupied." Armed with these books and pencils, our little army marched out of the building to begin what was to be a month of grim and concentrated effort.

Our instructions at this stage were brief: "Examine exteriors of properties back and front but do not bother householders if it can be avoided." The desire to save the feelings of the stricken inhabitants was a humane one, but the ban on knocking at doors and obtaining first-hand information of damage done brought about some freak results.

For example, experience has now taught us that an incendiary bomb can go through a roof, burn out the interior, and yet leave the outside seemingly untouched. On the other hand, houses which, from a cursory survey, appeared incapable of housing a tramp, were later found to have been tenanted without a break and the occupants prepared to pay their rates without demur.

A block of twenty houses, seemingly undamaged at the front, might be found to have one of its number badly shattered at the rear. How to identify the particular house in a maze of back-gardens, and give it a number, was no easy task. To make matters worse, there was often no access to the backs, and our guess from the appearance of the front that everything was all right, usually proved to be optimistic.

The completion of first-aid repairs hindered rather than helped the survey. A street so treated became as factful as a blank wall—every window concealed behind its barrier of roofing-felt, doors taken away, and all trace of occupation removed. Gone was our opportunity to peer into interiors and note the presence of furniture or a glowing fire. We could only scratch our heads and mark the properties as "slightly damaged and occupied"—a safe enough bet, if only because it ensured a demand note going to that address.

The absence of public curiosity at our comings and goings was astonishing. In normal times such a "round up" would have brought heads popping out of windows everywhere. Yet now, street after street failed to produce a soul. Bottles of milk or bread on the doorstep; messages to the postman; a drift of smoke from a chimney, a cat, or a child's toy—those were the things that helped us most.

Of harrowing sights there were many—the pathetic, unspoken horror of stricken houses abandoned in terror and at a moment's notice.

With some 40,000 houses destroyed or damaged, and with the citizens scattered throughout the countryside, it was inevitable that "address unknown" should confront us at every turn. The problem of tracing those missing people is one we have still to solve. It was noteworthy that all the notorious "bad payers" had taken the chance to steal away, to make a clean start, perhaps, in some other town.

To many of us, the experience was not a happy one. Often, we found a particular neighbourhood preying on our nerves. When this happened, we broke off and went to new ground, where the going was a little easier.

The survey completed, new tasks awaited us. To the valuation staff fell the job of giving expert appraisal to the seriously damaged houses and commercial buildings. To the rates staff fell the work of gathering in the money. That meant more queues at the counter, with irate ratepayers brandishing our well-meant efforts in the air. Wearily we tramped (and still do) from desk to counter, altering, amending, striking-out, tearing-up, in the thankless task of trying to satisfy everybody.

Ahead of us looms the thought of preparing new rate books without the aid of our addressograph machines; of balancing our present rate books; and of amending the valuation lists. But we do not forget that we have much to be thankful for. Our Council House escaped destruction by a miracle, and the more important of our records were preserved intact.

When we think that one night of enemy bombing caused all this, can you blame us if we rub our hands with glee when we think of the plight of the rate clerks of Bremen, Hanover, Cologne and the rest?

BRANCH JOURNALS That CARRY ON

By NORMAN H. ROGERS

MANY branch magazines have become war casualties—temporary only, we hope. The number has dropped from about eighty at the beginning of the war to fourteen, which includes three recent editions. But, whilst some of the more brilliant journals such as "IN PRINT" (**Birkenhead**), "THE GUILDER" (**Guildford**), "NEON" (**Lanarkshire**), "THE GREEN LIGHT" (**West Ham**) have been compelled to suspend publication, others, by dint of perseverance, economy, reorganisation, and unabated optimism, maintain an uninterrupted sequence of editions.

A fine example of perseverance is given by "IN AND OUT" (**Ealing**). Editor J. C. Sutcliffe started it in March, 1939. Came the war, and joint editors J. W. Bellamy and J. Rimmer took over, only to join, a few months later, their colleague in the Forces. Editor S. M. Kenny now wields the blue pencil, yet, despite all the changes, "In and Out" continues to retain its original personality and literary poise. Perhaps the fact that J. C. Sutcliffe has remained a regular contributor in spite of his army duties explains why the magazine has lost none of its old enthusiasm.

Economy is exemplified by the "SOUTH SHIELDS NEWS LETTER"—a duplicated and informative pamphlet, replacing its printed predecessor, the "SOUTH SHIELDS JOURNAL," to cut down expenses. Edited by J. Yeoman, devoid of all superfluous matter, it meets admirably the needs of the branch and members on service. Another duplicated magazine "THE STAFF JOURNAL" (**Hammersmith**) has just "arisen Phoenix-like" (so the editorial runs) from the cold ashes of "THE ECHO" under the editorship of H. Ward. Whilst economy has been achieved, its objects remain as before, with the important addition of establishing a definite link between the members in the Forces and those still at the town hall.

Reorganisation is typified by the "KENT COUNTY CHRONICLE" (editor, N. W. Bingham). At the beginning of the war, it was decided to suspend normal issues and to print instead "Emergency Bulletins" only. But, after fifteen months, it was found that the need for a more comprehensive chronicle was greater even than in normal times, and the magazine reappeared in January this year. The new magazine, indeed, is bigger and better than ever it was; one of the articles giving details of the guild scheme for helping bombed-out members provides an illuminating example of the way in which a branch can assist its members. It was the Kent County Guild which, as has already been recorded in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, organised a Voluntary Land Club for helping farmers and, incidentally, the B. and O. Fund. The Chronicle shows what a NALGO branch *can* do in war-time.

Under the heading of unabated enthusiasm fall "SOMERSET SCRIBBLES" (editor, A. E. Palmer), "GUILD JOURNAL" (**Manchester**), "GUILD JOURNAL" (**Sheffield**), with its jolly page of "Jackass," "QUARTERLY REVIEW" (**Bradford**), "AT YOUR SERVICE" (**Doncaster**) and "DEPTFORD NEWS." All these journals pursue their peace-time policy of progressive thought; current questions of cost-of-living and affiliation to the T.U.C. receive competent attention. "CALLING CROYDON" devotes much space to the T.U.C. question, publishing an article on it by Jack Hill of the Leicester branch. With the March edition, Norman H. Rogers hands over "Calling Croydon" to joint editors L. J. Moir and Stuart Ready, author of the radio thriller, "Five at the George."

For an epic of magazine production under "blitz" conditions, "CAMERA PRINCIPIS" (**Coventry**) provides an outstanding example. Editor M. J. Miles writes: "It took a full-blooded blitz to make "Camera Principis" falter in her stride. In November, for the first time since April 1932, when 'C.P.' was born, the monthly journal did not appear. At 8.55 a.m. on November 15, copy for that month was to have been handed to the printer. At 8.55 a.m. nothing was left of our printer's premises. They were gone, and with them our special type for the magazine cover. The December number was a really fine achievement by printer George Searson, of Nottingham, who did the work cheaply and quickly as a personal favour to Mr. R. I. Martin, of the magazine committee, and formerly co-editor of Nottingham's 'Gas Bulletin.' All available copy was sent to him, and, unasked, he added a cover indistinguishable from the old. There was no time to send proofs to Coventry, so he arranged the pages himself and delivered the journals well before Christmas."

The three recent editions to the ranks are "HAMPSTEAD NEWS LETTER" (edited by branch secretary W. J. Turner), a newsy circular which is hoped to be the forerunner of a branch journal; "ALL SWELL," a not-too-official bulletin published monthly by the **Camberwell** branch and edited by David Leggatt; and "SOUTHGATE SNIPS," jointly edited by H. J. Barker and E. I. Johnson. The last-named is a full-size duplicated magazine, expertly turned out and brightly illustrated.

Several other branches are thinking of producing magazines—and the example and success of these three should inspire them.

A NALGO PLANNING COMMISSION

ALGO is to set up a special Commission to consider the future of local rnment and to make proposals for its nstruction designed to equip it to meet the -war situation. This important decision reached at a meeting of the N.E.C. gency executive held in London on l 20.

fter some discussion of the terms of rence of the proposed commission it was ded, in view of the importance of the tion, to appoint, in the first place, a small ficial "guiding committee" consisting J. H. Warren, Mr. E. R. Davies, Mr. S. Lord, general secretary, and public relations officer.

committee will exne the whole position, rtain what is being e by other bodies, and e recommendations to next meeting of emergency executive May 31 for the conition, terms of refer-, and procedure of the commission.

Members of the emercy executive were nimous in agreeing that k of this kind was of l importance to ALGO and presented association with a gnificent opportunity to ct the thought of members along conuctive lines and to ure that, in the dissions now going on oughout the country, voice of local ernment officers was rd and their point view as experts in the operation of the ministrative machine adequately stated.

Other subjects dealt with by the emergency cutive included:

tandstill" Order for Local Government

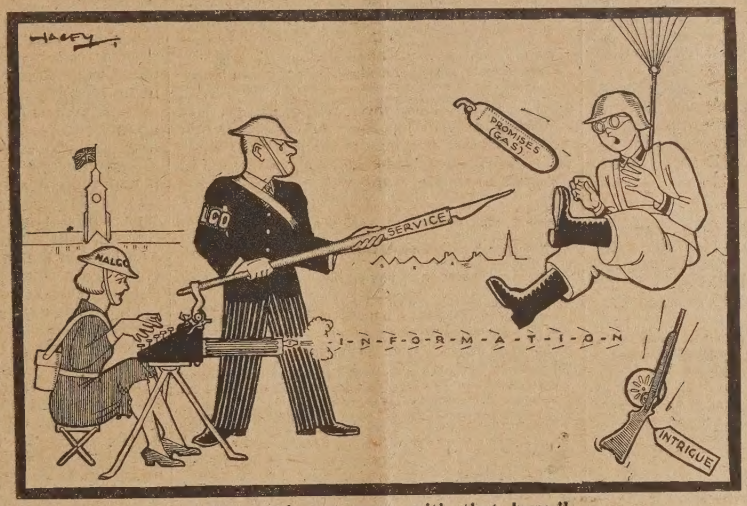
t was reported that the Middlesex county ncil had decided to ask the Minister of bour and National Service to apply to local vernment the Essential Work (General ovisions) Order, 1941, under which an emyee cannot leave the service of a particular ployer, and an employer cannot dismiss an ployee, except for serious misconduct, thout the consent of an officer of the inistry. The reason for this application, hich the Minister of Health and the County ouncils Association are being asked to supt, was that officers were continually leaving enter the service of other local authorities hich were not, as was Middlesex, refraining om making new appointments to the perinent staff, and that the county council was ving increasing difficulty in replacing em.

It was also reported that this question was be considered by the National Whitley ouncil. The emergency executive decided to fer it to the service conditions sub-committee, hich will formulate a policy for the guidance the NALGO members of the staff side the Whitley Council.

ational Service Bill—Superannuation Rights

It was reported that the National Service ill, under which men liable for military serce and conditionally registered conscientious bjectors may be called up for civil defence ork, contained no provisions empowering cal authorities to supplement the service pay employees called up in this way, or safeuarding their superannuation rights. The sociation had made representations to the Ministry of Labour and National Service and had arranged for an amendment to be put down on the committee stage of the bill.

This amendment was not accepted by the Government, but Mr. W. Mabane, parliamentary secretary to the Ministry of Home Security, stated that the Minister of Health was sending a circular to local authorities recognising as "war service" any service under the bill which was not already "war service" apart from such recognition. A copy of this circular had been submitted to headquarters, which was satisfied that it would cover every case likely to arise.



"You can't get away with that here."

Subscriptions of Service Members

It was reported that a number of branches were still neglecting to collect subscriptions from their members in the Forces even though those members were having their service pay made up. The view was unanimously expressed that branches everywhere should make arrangements to collect these subscriptions, on the following grounds:

1. Collection of the subscriptions had been approved by the delegate meeting and was fully justified, since all the members concerned were receiving additions to their service pay solely as a result of NALGO's efforts;
2. Failure to collect the subscriptions was liable to involve members in difficulties from operation of the penalty clauses which deprived those in arrear with their association subscriptions from the benefits of the ancillaries;
3. It was manifestly unfair that, owing to the neglect of some branches, a number of members on war service were not being asked to pay subscriptions, whereas others were doing so regularly.

It was pointed out that many branches had found no difficulty in collecting the subscriptions even of men who were serving abroad. The simplest method was by deduction from salary, which had been arranged in many areas.

Ruskin College, Oxford

It was agreed that NALGO should apply to be included in the list of trade unions whose members are able to obtain special terms for correspondence courses at Ruskin College, Oxford. These courses—which include local government—are mainly cultural, and do not compete with those of the Nalgo Correspondence Institute. Members interested should get into touch with headquarters.

Benevolent and Orphan Fund Grants

A resolution of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund committee, recommending a further increase of four per cent in the scale of allowances paid to beneficiaries of the fund, making a total increase of 10 per cent, equivalent to the National Whitley Council cost-of-living bonus award, was approved.

Cost-of-Living Bonus

Attention was drawn to the anomaly created by the revision of the National Whitley Council bonus award, as a result of which officers earning salaries between £300 and £500 receive a bonus ranging from £18 to £24 a year, whereas those with salaries of £300 receive £30. It was agreed to instruct the NALGO members of the staff side of the Whitley Council to endeavour to secure the removal of this anomaly at the next meeting.

Late Mr. W. H. Pullinger

Mr. J. T. Baker drew attention to the death of Mr. W. H. R. Pullinger, one of the pioneers of NALGO. The committee stood in silence for a few moments as a token of respect, and agreed that a letter of condolence be sent to the widow and family.

It was also decided to send a letter of sympathy and hope for his speedy recovery to Mr. J. H. Clark, one of the Yorkshire members of the N.E.C., who was reported to be seriously ill, and a letter to Mr. Haden Corser, divisional secretary, North Western and North Wales district and national Whitley officer, congratulating him on his escape when the hotel in which he was staying in London was bombed and set on fire in a recent raid.

NO PENSIONS BONUS

Minister's Refusal

AN influential deputation from the Trades Union Congress Advisory Committee for the local government service, which sought Government action to increase superannuation and retiring allowances to meet the rise in the cost of living obtained no satisfaction from the Minister of Health, Mr. Ernest Brown, on April 21. The deputation consisted of prominent members of the T. U. C., with the following NALGO representatives: Messrs H. Allen, F. H. Harrod, J. Simonds (legal secretary) and J. B. Swinden (organising secretary).

The deputation, after expressing appreciation of what had been done in recent years to extend the range and scope of superannnuation, pointed out that, while most wage earners had received cost of living bonuses or wage increases to help them meet the 28 per cent rise in living costs, pensioners had had nothing.

It was suggested that the additional cost —which would not be great—should be met from the same fund as that from which salaries and wages were paid.

Mr. Brown, in reply, said that the Government was determined to keep down the cost of living, and was spending £100,000,000 a year with that object. He could, therefore, hold out no hope of legislation to benefit one section of the community.

FEWER OFFICERS RESERVED

AS was generally expected, the new revision of the Schedule of Reserved Occupations, published last month, raises still further the age of reservation from military service for most local government officers.

Under the new scheme, " de-reservation "—to use the deplorable official terminology—is to take place in three stages, A, B, and C. Men " de-reserved " at the A stage will be required to join their units on or shortly after June 1. Dates for calling up men " de-reserved " at the other stages have not yet been fixed ; all the Ministry of Labour and National Service will say is that " B stage " men will not, as a rule, be called before the middle of July, and " C stage " men will not, as a rule, be called before October 1. All, however, may be required to attend for medical examination before these dates.

The principal provisions of the new schedule affecting local government officers are as follows. Where only one reservation age is given (as in the case of sanitary inspectors) it applies at all stages and until the next revision of the schedule.

England and Wales

Clerk, chief financial officer (and **deputy** to either appointed before May 1, 1940), **chief rating** or **chief valuation officer, senior poor law officer,** and **chief education officer**—age of reservation raised from 25 to **30** in **stage C.**

Scotland

Clerk, chief financial officer (and **deputy** to either appointed before May 1, 1940), **assessor** under the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Acts, **public assistance officer, deputy** and **assistant public assistance officer, governor of a poor house** and **chief education officer**—age of reservation raised from 25 to **30** in **stage C.**

England, Wales and Scotland

Sanitary inspector (with full statutory powers)—reserved at **25.**

Assistant sanitary inspector—reserved at 30.

(These reservation ages are the same as before. Sanitary inspectors and assistant sanitary inspectors below the ages of reservation will not be called on for general service, but may be called for service in their professional capacity.)

Other officers* not specifically reserved at a lower age by reason of occupation, or specifically excluded from reservation—age of reservation raised from 30 to **35** at **stage C.**

Medical officers and **lental officers** continue to be reserved at all ages. Notwithstanding this, however, they may, irrespective of age, be called up or accepted for service in a scientific or technical capacity in any of the national defence services.

The wide range of professions included in the local government service makes it impracticable to publish a complete list of the officers reserved at lower ages, but the following details (which may also include some designated as workmen) probably cover the majority. Officers with special professional or technical qualifications who are not mentioned are advised to consult a copy of the schedule :

Accountant (including cost and works accountant) with recognised professional qualifications (of which a list, including membership of the I.M.T.A., is given in the schedule)—age of reservation raised from 25 to **30** in **Stage B.**

Administrative, executive, technical and clerical staffs of county war agricultural executive committees (in England and Wales) and **agricultural executive committees** (in Scotland) employed wholetime on the work of the committees—reserved at **30**, subject to special conditions.

Gas plant station engineer, assistant engineer, engineer-in-charge, and **shift engineer**—reserved at 25.

Gas mains engineer, mains superintendent, mains inspector, assistant mains superintendent, assistant mains inspector, service manager, service supervisor, equipment engineer—reserved at **25.**

Harbour master, dock master, dock superintendent and **harbour and dock inspector**—age of reservation raised from 21 to **30** at **Stage B.**

Skilled vermin or pest destroyer (including fumigator) certified by the Ministry of Food as having been continuously employed for three years wholetime in the occupation by a local authority—age of reservation raised from 25 to **30** at **Stage B.**

Electricity supply.

Engineer, assistant engineer (combustion control, district, generation, mains development, mains (transmission and/or distribution), relay, resident, shift-charge, steam, sub-station) junior engineer, technical assistant, superintendent and assistant superintendent (boiler house, mains, meter and testing, power station, sub-station), inspector, assistant inspector (installation, meter, sub-station), meter tester, sub-station attendant, assistant sub-station attendant—reserved at **25** ; officers below 25 may be called up for service in a professional capacity only.

Chief technical officer (meter)—reserved at **25.**

Consumer's engineer, domestic appliance maintenance superintendent, auxiliary plant attendant, and **meter fixer**—reserved at **30.**

Civil engineer—reserved at **23** officers below 23 will be called up for service in a professional capacity only, and all are free to volunteer for such service, irrespective of age.

Electrical, gas and **water heating and ventilating engineers**—reserved at **25,** although free to volunteer for service in a scientific or technical capacity irrespective of age.

Student engineering apprentice or **learner** able to show that he is within two years of completing a course of study for one of certain specified engineering qualifications—reserved at **18.**

Whole-time **member of public fire brigade**—reserved at **18.**

Whole-time **member of auxiliary fire service**—reserved at **25,** if appointed before April 1, 1941, and at **30** if appointed on or after April 1, 1941.

Whole-time **clerk** and **assistant clerk to Justices**—reserved at **30.**

Whole-time **librarian, assistant librarian,** and **library assistant**—age of reservation increased from 30 to **35** at **stage B ; unreserved at stage C.**

Male nurse, mental nurse, operating theatre attendant—reserved at **30,** but men below that age will not be called on for service other than in a technical capacity.

Radiographer and **X-Ray operator**—reserved at **25,** but men below that age will not be called on for service other than in a technical capacity.

Hospital and institution porter—reserved at **30.**

Certified masseur—age of reservation increased from 30 to **35** at **stage C.**

Whole-time **probation officer**—reserved at **30.**

Water works manager, deputy manager, assistant manager, district manager, superintendent, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendent, district inspector, assistant district inspector—reserved at **25.**

Water service waste inspector—reserved at **30.**

In addition to library staffs who, as stated above, become unreserved at stage C, the following officers are unreserved immediately :

Staff of **museums and art galleries,** unless in an occupation specifically reserved elsewhere in the schedule ;

Bathing establishment superintendent and manager ;

Gas and electric meter reader, pre-payment meter coin collector ;

Mace bearer ;

Piano tuner ;

Rent collector.

Part IV of the schedule gives a list of occupations in which women only are reserved, irrespective of age. These include housing managers, midwives, and nurses (other than children's nurses).

In Part III, it is pointed out that nothing in the schedule prevents :

(a) A man from undertaking service on a normal engagement in the regular armed forces, the public police forces, or the public fire brigades ;

(b) Men not yet of an age to register under the National Service (Armed Forces) Acts in occupations for which the age of reservation is 25 or above, from being accepted for general service in young soldier battalions ;

(c) Persons from undertaking part-time service in the civil defence services ;

(d) Persons from undertaking A.R.P. service at their place of employment ;

(e) Persons who enrolled for part-time service in the A.F.S. before January 25, 1939, from accepting whole-time service in the A.F.S.

(f) Women in any occupation from joining the Women's Land Army ; or one of the nursing or first aid services ; women in a reserved occupation from being accepted in any of the services of national defence in their trade capacity ; and

(g) Men of any age or any occupation who volunteer and are suitable from being enlisted as air pilot or observer in the R.A.F. or Fleet Air Arm ; men who were members of the Civil Air Guard from being enlisted in the R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve or the Fleet Air Arm.

Minister's Statement

A circular issued to local authoritities by the Ministry of Health on April 10 gives details of a statement made by the Minister to representatives of the associations of local authorities before the publication of the new schedule. In this he said that, while it had been necessary to raise the reservation age for most local government officers, the Government recognised to how great an extent local authorities and their officers were now engaged upon work of civil defence or other work vital to the continuance of the country's war effort. Subject always to the exigencies of the war, it was, therefore, intended to give every possible facility to local authorities to rearrange their staffs in such a way as to prevent interference with essential work.

To ease the situation as far as possible, the new ages would not take effect until October 1, and even after that date, further deferment for substantial periods might be granted to men essential to the performance of civil defence and all services vital to the life of the community in war time.

Deferment will only be granted for a man whose place cannot be effectively taken by an older man or woman, or by sharing the duties, and it will not be practicable to secure any extension of deferments granted to June 1 or earlier, save in most exceptional cases.

" The Minister," the circular added, " fully appreciates the difficulties with which local authorities are faced in carrying on the essential services for which they are responsible. He feels it necessary, however, to warn them that paramount national requirements are likely, in the course of this year, to involve further demands upon them to release more members of their staffs for service with H.M. Forces. It is essential, therefore, that local authorities should at once review the position and make preparations in good time, either by reorganisation of work or by appointment of substitutes, which will enable them to meet the needs of the Services . . .

" In looking for substitutes for administrative or technical staff, local authorities should bear in mind the following points :

" (a) The Central Register and the divisional Supplementary Registers of the Ministry of Labour are available for consultation ;

" (b) Experience equal to that of the man who is to be called up cannot be expected in a substitute ; reliance should be placed upon the adaptability of candidates for training ;

" (c) In particular, consideration should be given to the practicability of employing women as substitutes in administrative and technical posts normally filled by men.

" The Minister feels bound to impress upon local authorities the imperative need for availing themselves of the further period of six months before the date of operation of the revised schedule (as affecting their staff), to make necessary arrangements for release of the staff thereby affected. Where, however, any local authority can show a well-founded claim for temporary deferment in relation to an individual member of its staff (e.g. where substitute staff has been found but will need a period of training for important work) the Minister will be prepared to consider it, and to make such recommendation as he may feel to be justified to the Minister of Labour and National Service."

* *As in the previous schedule, the terms " local authority " and " local government officer " are to be interpreted as within the meaning of The Local Government Superannuation Acts, 1937, except that local authority does not include a parish council in England and Wales or a district council in Scotland.*

NALGO NOTICE BOARD

following extracts from a circular 7/Gen/41) sent to branch secretaries on 15 will be of interest to all members.

bers In Home Guard

ould members of NALGO serving in Home Guard be called out for whole-service in the event of invasion, that e will count as "war service" within neaning of section 14 (1) of the Local rnment Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939. herefore, the authority has adopted the sions of the Act, they will be entitled to their Home Guard pay supplemented to ame extent as their colleagues serving in egular Forces or in civil defence.

strial Registration

hile women of 20 and 21 and men of 41 42 have been instructed to register for strial work, there is no intention of oving local government officers from their nt tasks so long as those tasks are essential. ald it be found, however, that an officer's is being wasted—for example, that a ed engineer is doing rating work or collect-rents—then he is likely to be drafted into stry. Similarly, it has been stated in the se of Commons that women in the full-employment of local authorities and se qualifications are being properly utilised, not be diverted to other work without sultation with the authorities concerned.

Prevention (Business Premises) Order, 1941

his order applies to all business premises luding local government offices and in-tions) in certain prescribed areas, and to mises specially prescribed. Under the order, occupier of such premises must arrange their protection from fire resulting from my action, and all male employees working he premises between the ages of 16 and 60 who are British subjects, must perform fire prevention duties allotted to them. portant points about the order include :

it is the duty of the employer to consult ith persons working at the premises or eir representatives before making fire revention arrangements ;

With certain exceptions, it is the duty of all male workers at the premises between 16 and 60 who are British subjects to perform fire prevention duties up to a maximum of 48 hours a month outside working hours ;

3. A worker is not required to undertake fire prevention duty at premises other than those at which he works.

Where, however—as happens with many local government officers—a person normally divides his working time between a number of different premises, he may be required to undertake fire prevention duties at any one of those premises, so long as his total period of duty outside working hours does not exceed 48 hours a month.

The following classes of officers are exempted from the requirements of the order :

1. Officers exempted in whole or in part by a Military Service (Hardship) committee, on the grounds that they are medically unfit or that the duties would impose exceptional hardship on them ;
2. Officers already performing fire prevention duties for the full period required at other premises to which the order applies ;
3. Home Guards ;
4. Officers who, on January 18, 1941, had undertaken to perform civil defence duties for periods totalling not less than 48 hours a month, and who continue to perform such duties ;
5. Officers exempted by the Minister of Home Security on the ground that they are engaged on vital work for exceptionally long hours, or who are engaged on specified duties to forestall or mitigate hostile attacks on the premises.

A.R.P. Staffs Eligible for Membership

All officers in the A.R.P. services of local authorities are eligible for membership of NALGO, so long as they come within the new definition of "officer" included in the rules of the association. For the purposes of that definition, officer means a local authority employee whose duties are wholly or mainly administrative, professional, or clerical, or who earns more than £250 a year, and is not an employed contributor within the meaning of the National Health Insurance Act, 1936.

Charges at "Nalgo House"

In view of rising costs, charges at the association's convalescent home, "Nalgo House," Matlock, have been increased as follows :

For members of the Provident Society and Benevolent and Orphan Fund, and members of the Approved Society not entitled to free membership—from £2 2s. to **£2 7s.** p.w.

For other members—from £2 12s. 6d. to **£2 17s. 6d.** p.w.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Superannuation Payments on Fees

Owing to the postponement of the preparation of the register of electors, I lost fees which averaged £34 a year. I am in my last five years' service, so this loss will adversely affect my superannuation allowance. I do not pay superannuation contributions, because I was over the age of 55 when my council adopted the Local Government and other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922. Section 2 of the Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1940, provides that officers who have lost election fees can pay superannuation contributions based on the fees they received in 1939, and the amount of those fees will then be taken into account, for the purpose of calculating their superannuation allowance. Since, normally, I do not pay superannuation contributions, do those provisions help me ?

Yes. If you want the fees which you would have received but for the operation of the Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1939, to be reckoned as part of your remuneration for superannuation purposes, you should pay superannuation contributions thereon to your council at the rate of 5 per cent of the fees received by you in 1939. The council will then be required to pay an equivalent sum into the superannuation fund.

Unemployment Insurance

I receive a salary of less than £420 a year and have to pay unemployment insurance contributions. If the necessary application had been made by my council before November 1, 1940, I could have been included in a certificate of exception, but no application was made. Can I be included in a certificate of exception now ?

No, and since you earn less than £420 a year and are not included in such a certificate you must pay unemployment insurance contributions.

Notification of Illness

If I am ill and submit a medical certificate to my employer for record purposes, should I also notify my Approved Society of my incapacity before the certificate is returned to me for forwarding to the society ?

Yes, you should inform the society of your illness within the first three days, stating that medical evidence will be submitted as soon as it is received from your employer. Otherwise, you may lose benefit, owing to late notice.

Provident Society Benefits

Can a member of the Provident Society's Hospital and Nursing Home Scheme, who is not in a position to pay the accounts before a cheque in settlement of his claim is received, submit unreceipted accounts ?

Yes, provided they are returned to headquarters duly receipted, as soon as possible after the cheque has been received by the member.

MODEL FIRE-WATCHING SCHEME

NDER the Fire Prevention (Business Premises) Order, 1941, all local authorities, in common with other employers, were uired, in consultation with their staffs, to pare schemes for a proper fire patrol on unicipal premises. The degree to which ffs have been consulted, and the efficiency the schemes drawn up, has varied ; one of best in the country is that adopted at st Ham.

Here, Mr. E. R. Gamester, the secretary of NALGO branch, was appointed by the uncil as co-ordinating officer for the scheme, th authority to appoint necessary staff.

The branch immediately invited the tional Union of Clerks, the National Union County Officers, the National Union of neral and Municipal Workers, the National nion of Public Employees, the Transport and neral Workers Union, and the West Ham achers' Association, to send one representative each to a committee of organizations ; NALGO was represented on this committee by the chairman and treasurer of the anch and the chairman of the finance and neral purposes sub-committee, together with r. Gamester himself.

The committee drew up a scheme which has en unanimously approved by the council. he scheme provides for the creation of a pool all corporation employees to watch corporation buildings. The watchers are organised squads of three and undertake duty by rota up to a maximum of 48 hours a month. Any surplus watchers will be used, first to increase the strength of the squads to four, then to reduce the number of duty hours.

Suitable accommodation, with camp beds, bedding (including two blankets and a pillow-slip for the use of each man), and facilities for making refreshments, is provided for the watchers in each building and the council has agreed to provide helmets, torches and, where necessary, overalls and mackintoshes.

Watchers are allowed reasonable time to go home to change their clothes before going on duty, and to obtain sandwiches, etc., before starting work in the morning ; in addition, when there is an alert between 10 p.m. and dawn, watchers on duty during that time are allowed half the length of the alert period off duty next day, either at the beginning or at the end of the day's work.

Each watcher on full day or night shift is given 5s. subsistence allowance, and the council pays extra fares. Wherever practicable, watchers are allowed to change their rotas to avoid duty when on holiday.

The committee has also been empowered to advise the council on applications for exemption from duty.

It is interesting to note that the other unions concerned intend to use this admirable scheme as a model throughout the country. NALGO branches could not do better than follow their example.

"FELLOW WORKERS..."

By COMRADE JACKASS

THE problem of whether N A L G O should affiliate with the Trades Union Congress is not new, nor have the real factors for or against varied since the sponsors of affiliation met with a resounding defeat at Conference. Only the T.U.C. itself has changed, from a questionable body which once staged a general strike and disrupted the life of the nation, to a dignified organisation deservedly recognised as the official voice of labour, to be consulted and cajoled by the Government of the day as a reward for loyally supporting the war effort. The T.U.C. has become respectable, and local government officers who would blush to wear a red tie or sign themselves " yours fraternally " have begun to wonder whether it may not be, after all, just a great maternal whale beneath whose kind almighty fin even the littlest fish may safely enter in. Realising this, those favouring affiliation have followed the established democratic practice of accepting a majority decision only until opportunity occurs to reverse it, and have resurrected what many of us thought a corpse.

The Clerk and I always welcome any national issue sufficiently intriguing to distract the attention of our executive committee from tiresome details of salaries and service conditions, especially if, by adroit references to committees and subsequent reports, interest can be maintained over a few months. We remembered how the Code of Professional Conduct furnished harmless material for seven full-dress debates and kept the executive busy for months, during which we, as the negotiating committee, were not called on to approach the Council at all. We hoped that, properly handled, this trade union business might provide us with another period of peace.

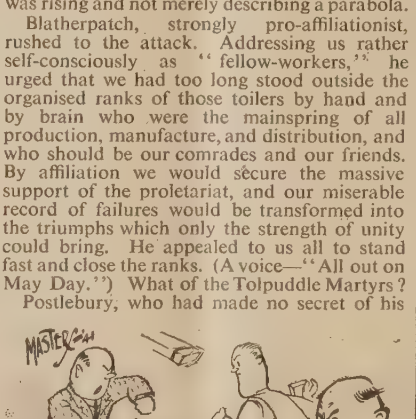
The Clerk directed me to stimulate interest as much as I could, even intimating that no official notice would be taken of animated discussions among the staff during working hours. I flatter myself that the results I obtained, culminating in a free-for-all battle with inkpots, rulers, and paperweights, must have surprised and delighted him. At any rate, he decided that sufficient heat had been generated to warrant an executive committee debate, and included " To decide the attitude of the Much Cowslip Branch towards affiliation with the Trades Union Congress " on the agenda for the next meeting.

Knowing that some of the more ardent spirits had taken half-bricks in their pockets, I took the first-aid kit with me. The Clerk's introductory remarks were a masterpiece of non-committal verbiage. He recalled the Conference debate resulting in rejection of the same proposal a few years ago. At that time, he emphasised, Mr. Ernest Bevin was not a Cabinet Minister, nor was Sir Walter Citrine a Privy Councillor.

On the other hand, there was no certainty that when the unusual circumstances of war had disappeared, those gentlemen would retain the influence and prestige they now enjoyed. The question arose whether one ought to decide the long-term policy of an association on the basis of circumstances arising from and largely contingent on the continuance of temporary wartime needs. For the moment, there was a measure of co-operation between employers and employed, united to face a common danger. There was a truce to party politics. Thus the T.U.C. was in the happy position of working amiably with and among many who had been its bitter opponents, and its leaders were welcomed into the counsels of those controlling the conditions of industry. He was not sure that, when the stress of war had eased, and party politics returned, employers would continue willingly to accord the same share of control to the representatives of their workpeople, or that a peacetime Government, possibly from a party not traditionally friendly to the T.U.C., would bestow Cabinet rank and other honours on its leaders. A long experience of Whitleyism made him doubt the permanence of friendly relations between classes whose interests and views were so frequently at variance as those of employers and employed. He favoured hitching one's wagon to a star, provided it was rising and not merely describing a parabola.

Blatherpatch, strongly pro-affiliationist, rushed to the attack. Addressing us rather self-consciously as " fellow-workers," he urged that we had too long stood outside the organised ranks of those toilers by hand and by brain who were the mainspring of all production, manufacture, and distribution, and who should be our comrades and our friends. By affiliation we would secure the massive support of the proletariat, and our miserable record of failures would be transformed into the triumphs which only the strength of unity could bring. He appealed to us all to stand fast and close the ranks. (A voice—" All out on May Day.") What of the Tolpuddle Martyrs?

Postlebury, who had made no secret of his determination not to be linked with any worker in case he should be expected to work, confessed that he had never heard of the Tolpuddle Martyrs—martyrs of any kind were unlucky people and he had no desire to associate with them. He questioned whether linking our lot with the proletariat would increase our status or salaries; his experience had been that the despised bourgeoisie usually led more comfortable lives and enjoyed better standards. Basically, the object of any trade union was to obtain better wages and conditions for its members and he was content to ask whether affiliated trade unions had yet obtained for their members better wages, longer holidays, better sickness allowances, and better pensions schemes than our own.



" . . . . and a general mêlée ensued."

He suggested that the Executive should be honest with itself. Much had been heard of the support we might receive—but little of the duty which would fall on us of supporting other affiliated unions. For the moment, legislation appeared to preclude another attempt at a general strike, but legislation could change. Would they, in that event, be prepared to demonstrate their solidarity with other workers by obeying an order for a general strike in sympathy with, for example, dock labourers? Looking round the room, he thought he could answer his own question.

He hesitated to introduce politics into the debate, and he was aware that, technically, affiliation to the T.U.C. did not constitute membership of the Labour Party, but he was not aware that any prominent Conservative or Liberal had been or was ever likely to be among the leaders of the T.U.C. One could not honestly dismiss as mere coincidence the fact that they belonged exclusively to one party, nor pretend that affiliation to any organisation so controlled by declared politicians of one party was other than a political alliance. (Cries of " No," " Yes " and " Good old Possie.") Let us be honest—the T.U.C. was as Socialist as the Primrose League was Conservative (immediate uproar).

It was at this stage that someone threw the first half-brick. Aimed at Postlebury, it glanced with delightful impartiality from his left ear on to Blatherpatch's nose. With an enraged bellow, the latter struck his nearest neighbour (who happened to be one of his supporters) sharply over the head with an ebony ruler, and a general mêlée ensued.

It was obvious that no further progress could be expected that night, so the Clerk switched off the lights, declared the meeting closed, and retreated with me to the safety of the street. We agreed that by all appearances we can count on several more months of futile discussion—futile, first because no decision is possible on such a problem during wartime while so many members are with the Forces and Conferences are taboo, and secondly because, after the war, everybody will be too occupied with other matters to care twopence whether we affiliate or not. However, the resumed debate should be very interesting, especially if Blatherpatch is sufficiently recovered to attend

AT RANDOM

By "Hyperion"

Drawings by J. Carver

War-time Diet

"I didn't like those eggs you sent me yesterday."

"Why, what was wrong with them, madam?"

"I thought they were rather undersized for their age."

Limerick

There was a young fellow of St. Bartholomew's
Whose car went by fits and Startholomews
Till a fellow named St. John
Overhauled the old t John
And fitted it out with new St. Partholomews.
—Anon.

That Early Morning Feeling

A Corps Commander had been telling a number of Army officers that they would be no use to the Army unless they jumped out of bed

"with a shout." One Guards officer (D.S.O., M.C.), asked by another whether he had done so that morning, said, "I am afraid I am no good to the Army. I crawled out of bed with a shudder."

—*Charles Graves in "The Daily Mail."*

And in the Dust

I print this as the silliest communication I have received this year. It comes from Kensington:

"If anything is needed to demonstrate the strength of democracy in Britain it is provided by the fact that debris from the bombed lodge at Buckingham Palace is now mingling with lesser debris from the East End on the gigantic dump in Hyde Park. What could be more democratic?"

—"*Evening Standard.*"

Presence of Mind

The following was the conclusion of a telephone conversation between an officer and the War Office the other day:

Officer: ". . . *and I want this dealt with promptly, without your usual d—— delay. Cut out the b—— red tape.*"

War Office Voice: "*Do you know whom you are talking to?*"

O.: "*No.*"

W.O.V.: "*I am General Blank.*"

O.: "*Indeed—and do you know whom you are talking to?*"

W.O.V.: "*No.*"

O.: "*Thank God for that!*" (Rings off.)

Our Resourceful Recruits

A nervous young recruit to one of the women's home defence services was being examined by her grimly efficient commandant.

"Where is your indelible pencil?" she was asked.

"I didn't know I needed one. What is it for?"

"To write the names and addresses of the casualties upon their foreheads, of course," the commandant replied briskly.

The recruit pondered this. Then an idea struck her.

"But what do I do if the casualty is a negro?"

An Allenby Story

On one occasion, when inspecting a regiment, he stopped suddenly and said to the squadron commander, "Do all your men wear socks?" "Why, of course, sir," said the scandalised commander. "I wonder," replied Allenby. "Dismount that trooper" (pointing to a man in the ranks), "and let him take off his boots." The man was found barefooted. "There you are, you see," said Allenby. "Not at all what I would have expected in a well-conducted squadron!" Later, when the inspection was over, the crestfallen squadron commander summoned courage and asked Allenby, "General, how did you know that man had no socks?" "Well," said Allenby, "he was my batman once. I could never make the fellow wear them; I wondered whether you had been more successful."

—*From "Allenby," by Gen. Sir Archibald Wavell.*

Overheard

"Florence says *her* hens have laid much bigger and better eggs since the bomb dropped at the end of her road."

"It seems to me that as the war goes on and on we shall be spending more and more on less and less, until eventually it will take every penny to buy nothing."

"She's one of those wireless wives—listens to nobody but the B.B.C."

"My only complaint about Edna since rationing started is that she's too vitamin-conscious."

Nightjars Sometimes Chirp

Among the many leading business men who have promised to appear at the Grand Charity Smoking Gala to be held at the Hotel Ostentatious next Friday in aid of the Toxic Comforts Fund for Evacuated Blondes is Sir Herbert Toxic himself, the eminent financier and philanthropist. He will sing: "*It's a lovely inst. to-morrow! To-morrow is a lovely ult.!*"

—*Maurice Lane-Norcott in "The Daily Mail."*

Heard on the B.B.C.

(*In an account by an R.S.D. man of a rescue of a girl who had been trapped for several hours under fallen debris.*)

"When I got down to her, I found her making up her face, and she just stepped out

like a duchess stepping out from a perfumed bath—not that I've ever *seen* a duchess stepping out of a perfumed bath!"

MISCELLANEOUS

BE TALLER!!—Quickly!! Safely!! Privately!! Ross System Never Fails. Fee £2:2s complete. Details 6d. stamp: **MALCOLM ROSS, Height-Specialist, BM/HYTE, LONDON, W.C.1.**

BUSH APPLES, PLUMS, PEARS, CHERRIES, 2/- each. Cordon Pears, Apples, Plums, 4 years, 2/- each; St. Apples, Plums, Pears, Cherries, 3/- each. Flowering Shrubs, 12, 6/-, Bush Roses, 5/- doz. St. Roses, 1/6 each. C. paid.—VICTORIA NURSERY, Exeter.

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LITERARY

WRITE FOR PROFIT in Spare Time.—The ideal wartime hobby. Send for free booklet.—**Regent Institute (190G), Palace Gate, W.8.**

LAST WORDS ON THE AFFILIATION ISSUE

With the publication of this month's letters on the question of N A L G O's affiliation to the T.U.C., we feel that both sides have had full opportunity to state their views, and have therefore decided to close the correspondence.

WHAT NOW?

Remoulding N A L G O

AS the original sponsor of the 1936 resolution urging affiliation with the T.U.C., I hope you will allow me to comment on the present situation.

Clearly, for the time being, the day is lost; but the fact that, after unanimously disposing of the affiliation issue, the N.E.C. referred the next item on the agenda to the consideration of the T.U.C. advisory committee, proves that in due course wiser counsels will prevail.

By the way, how can one account for the unanimity of the decision after several decided speeches *for* affiliation, particularly from the South Wales delegates? I am afraid this was a case of "actions speak louder than words."

However, let not supporters of affiliation lose heart; the pressure of events has brought about greater changes in greater organisations than N A L G O. In particular, I am convinced that the return to N A L G O life and activity of those young and virile members at present with the Forces will prove a great accession to what I will term the Progressive Party inside the association.

For, make no mistake, N A L G O, like present-day society in general, is split into two camps: the "let things stand as they are" people, and the "progressive party"—those people who wish to see the world (which includes N A L G O, in spite of the blind isolationism of some of the anti-affiliationists) a better place than it is today.

The great argument of the anti-affiliationists is that local government officers, being servants of the state apparatus, should remain neutral in politics. What about the civil service organisations? It is well-known that only the Trades Disputes Act of a Tory government debars these organisations from T.U.C. affiliation; and the attempt to preserve an artificial distinction is actually a device to further Tory ends.

Let us be frank. Can any sane and right-minded man pretend to stand aside from politics in days such as these when *bad* politics have plunged humanity again for the second time in a generation into world-wide slaughter of the innocents and when only the hope of better things to come sustains millions in their present miseries and trials? Is the local government officer condemned to remain for ever a political eunuch?

Never! not only will he not, but he cannot!

Those N A L G O members in uniform today for different reasons and diverse views will, in my judgment, have at least one thing in common when they return: the desire for *change for the better*—the desire which, in countless generations, has enabled mankind, after thousands of years, to achieve something.

The argument on which these conservatives depend is based on the false assumption that the state itself is politically neutral, above party and above class. Historically speaking, the state, far from being neutral, is a weapon in the hands of the class that possesses it. Some of the bitterest pages in English and world history reflect the struggle of parties and classes to get hold of this great instrument, an instrument which, up to the present, has always been in the hands of the possessing classes.

Now, if the day is (for the present) lost, what tasks lie before affiliationists to mould N A L G O nearer to their heart's desire? Some have been indicated in the discussion arising out of the so-called Critic's apologia for things as they are.

I have not space to deal with all the points I should like, but, briefly, urgent and pressing reforms include:

1. The exclusion of all chief officers from N A L G O (by special arrangement existing "friendly society" rights could be held open for them). Are not Jackass's brilliant satires, like all satires true to life, proof of the need for this?
2. Concentration on a revitalised bread and butter policy will be helped by considerably increasing the present inadequate staffing of district offices, etc.
3. The evil of compulsory extensive overtime will be tackled vigorously as a result of a clearly pronounced national policy which will be implemented by vigorous action on a district basis.
4. Pending the securing of compulsory national salary scales, the existing Whitley scales will be really campaigned for—not, as at present, pleaded for, prayed for, and hoped for.
5. To escape to some extent the widespread evil of nepotism—rampant in Tory and Labour councils alike—N A L G O will insist on a common gateway for all new entrants to the service which will secure admittance by merit alone (not necessarily by examination alone).
6. As part of the re-orientation, N A L G O will not fail to discuss and *publicise* its attitude on vital matters affecting local government in general. For example, why does it not use the present difficulties of the rating system to point out that a system which had its genesis in the needs of 16th or 17th century England is a miserable anachronism in 20th century Britain?
7. Accompanying these changes will go forward a genuine democratisation of N A L G O with more frequent meetings of branches, of the N.E.C. and, especially important in my view, of district committees. These last represent one of the healthiest aspects of N A L G O today. In them are gathered often the most vital elements of the association and their discussions are often less hide-bound than those of the N.E.C.—perhaps because there are more junior officers among their members. What, in passing, is the average age and salary of the N.E.C. member compared with N A L G O as a whole?
8. The burning issues of local grievances, such as unfair appointments, unfair increases to certain members, and so on, will receive more serious attention than at present. This will be achieved by a franker policy, coupled with the outside intervention from organiser or district committee which the increased staff plus more frequent district committee meetings would assist.
9. All the foregoing will necessitate an increased subscription; never was the old adage that what is too cheap is not appreciated more justified than in relation to N A L G O. I am satisfied that those members who grumble most at paying their dues—juniors and women—would be the first to agree to increased subscriptions based on a policy (such as this) directed towards advancing their interests.
10. As a typical member of N A L G O, I place the women last! For them, the need is simple—equality for the sexes. I want to see this carried out *in practice*—I know it is already supposed to be agreed *in principle*. This means equal pay for equal work (what is happening today up and down the country?) and the right of married women to carry on with their work equally with married men, if they so desire.

Do I expect to see this rough draft of a N A L G O Utopia carried into practice? Yes! I do. But it will not be effected unless the united effort of every keen and progressive N A L G O-ite is organised to this end.

Cannot we who are left in the service use this period to promote useful discussion on the role of N A L G O in the post-war period? Cannot we agree, for example, to promote a "New Charter" for N A L G O and possibly to inaugurate, what has been the turning-point of many of the old manual workers' unions, an unofficial reform movement which will help to consolidate the obvious movement "from below" which is so evident in N A L G O and of which your correspondence columns often provide such striking evidence?

I would be glad if any interested would write to me on this suggestion. In particular, I would be glad to hear from N A L G O members serving in the Forces—many of whom, I know, pay more attention to N A L G O today than ever they did.

33, Alma Street, MERLYN MORGAN.
Abertillery, Mon.

READERS' FORUM

Letters for the June number must reach the Editor, "Local Government Service," 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Middlesex, not later than May 14. Where possible, they should be sent in duplicate, to minimise risk of loss.

Is it Humbug?

OPPONENTS of affiliation produce an old and familiar "red herring" when they speak of the pride and privilege we have in being servants of the public. When will they be honest enough to admit that we are in local government to make a living and that to profess any higher motive is humbug?

Now a move has been proposed which might greatly increase N A L G O's power, and we are told that we must not "break faith with the public"—a public which often rewards officers in responsible positions with wages that a labourer would refuse, a public that recognises countless hours of unpaid overtime and A.R.P. work by parsimonious quibbling over war bonuses and war service allowances.

Hastings. NOT A RED.

Not the Time to Decide

"EAST Sussex" appears from his letter in the March journal to have assumed much when he refers to the "general desire of members for affiliation to the T.U.C."

There is, no doubt, a large section desiring affiliation, and the only method, fair to all, of deciding the issue is by individual ballot such as was held in 1920 on the question of whether N A L G O should become a trade union. I suggest that the present time, when over 15,000 are serving in H.M. Forces and are probably unable to vote, is not the proper time for a ballot on a question of such importance. When the war is ended and the lads are back from the Services, by all means let us vote; but, in the meantime, I think the N.E.C. would have done the association a grave disservice had it given way to those who scream for an immediate decision.

On the subject of "executive 'yes men,'" what would your correspondent have in place of the branch executive? A paid secretary whose views coincided exactly with his own?

In my view, the duty of the branch executive is to represent the views of the members who elected them; if those members are dissatisfied with their representatives, the remedy is in their own hands. Every member of this branch—of which his nom-de-plume leads me to believe your correspondent to be a member—has the right to vote for his representative on the executive committee, and if he feels he

(Continued on page 112)

IT IS SO EASY to waste money on personal luxuries and excuse yourself by saying that it is only **1/- A WEEK**
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If you invest these small sums regularly every week in National Savings Certificates, they will help to win the war, earn interest for you, and in 10 years amount to just over **£30**
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Issued by The National Savings Committee, Lon

(Continued from page 110)

made a bad choice, he will have another chance next October. If, on the other hand, he was amongst the minority, it is just too bad, from his point of view, that our system provides for government by majority.

In any case, I do not agree that our executive committee consists of "yes men" of the county council, or that they suffer any restraining influence from the higher officials (two), who are members of the committee.

East Sussex C.C. Branch, Lewes. — H. W. KING, honorary secretary.

Chief Officers' Attitude

IN arguing, during the N.E.C. debate on affiliation to the T.U.C., that if NALGO were to affiliate, chief and senior officers would leave the association, Mr. H. J. Altoun did not pursue his line of reasoning far enough—he made no effort to explain why these members would resign from NALGO.

This explanation is simple: many of the chief officers and senior officers have strong societies of their own, and in any case there can be no doubt that most of them join NALGO only so that they may keep a heavy thumb on local activities. Instances of this are, I think, numerous enough to establish this point beyond dispute.

J.

SMALL COUNCILS' PROBLEM

Registration the Solution

"CRITIC'S" article was needed. It is a fact that the Civil Service Clerical Association, though comparable with NALGO, is far more active, and has established a superior scheme of standard conditions than can be found anywhere in the local government service.

We all know that NALGO has one great problem to overcome—that of dealing with so many local authorities (many of them too small to undertake responsibilities) to achieve its aims. This difficulty can be largely overcome by regionalisation: one example, appropriately suggested by Sir Patrick Dollan, would be a Clyde Valley Regional Council. There may be disadvantages in this reform, but many more advantages would be secured from its adoption, and it would solve many problems of local government.

If we are to have a desirable association, we must increase and regrade subscriptions, and so ensure more activity and successful proposals, especially in the interests of the rank and file, thereby making more headway in determining the future position of the local government officer. Through Whitleyism and in co-operation with the Government and other affected unions it can be done.

Borough Treasurer's Dept., Bromley, Kent. — J. M. C. NIECE.

NALGO ORGANISATION

Local, or Sectional?

NALGO'S organisation today is based largely on regional lines, whereas it should, it appears to me, take more account of the interests of individual members. The water department of Glasgow, for example, has more in common with the water department of Southampton than it has with the market department of Glasgow. There are many societies representing branches of local government service, but, so far as I know, none is in any way affiliated to the body which represents the mass of local government employees. Trade unions are associations of people doing similar work, more than individuals paid out of a common purse.

I would suggest, therefore, that the association should be organised in sections to watch the interests of clerical workers, hospital workers, health department workers, central administration, etc., with an official of the association drawn from the ranks of these sections and thus more in touch with the interests of those he represents.

I would point out that I am ignorant of the present organisation of NALGO. I have always been employed in rather obscure branches of local government, where the association has been weak, and do not intend my observations to be in the nature of criticism. I am glad, however, to be a member of an association which has done so much to improve the lot of local government employees.

31, Antrobus Road, Sutton Coldfield. — F. W. ROBERTS.

BRANCH SHORTCOMINGS

Is N.E.C. Responsible?

WHILE I agree with much of what "Critic" says, I believe that he underestimates the significance of the critical writers in "Readers' Forum." Their number, regularity, variety and territorial distribution mean much more to the acute observer than any of the specific criticisms which are made. There is indication of a more than "superficial" discontent and of a greater degree of rank and file interest and activity than "Critic" realises.

He suggests that branch executive committees are often slow in action, timid and capitulating in their demands. Where I have observed this tendency it was generally justified by its adherents on the basis of some statement by the N.E.C. More than this, such persons were generally N.E.C. members or strong supporters of the N.E.C.

My own opinion, therefore, is that N.E.C. personnel and policy have a greater responsibility for branch shortcomings than "Critic" admits. This does not, of course, detract from his castigation of the rank and file generally.

Personally, I am in favour of T.U.C. affiliation, but do not, as "Critic" puts it, expect miracles; nor, I think, does any other person of my opinion.

J. S. COVENTRY (Gnr.).

DIGGING FOR VICTORY

What Surrey Branches Have Done

I WAS interested to read Mr. John Young's account in the March journal, of the work of the Kent County Officers' Voluntary Land Club in "Digging for Victory." Mr. Young declared that what can be done in Kent, in the vicinity of "Hell's Corner," can surely be done equally well in other less harassed districts. It can—as I hope this account of the work of the Surrey Land Club will show.

The club began when in June last year I mentioned the idea to members attending courses of poultry-keeping which I was then giving in three centres in Surrey. As a technical officer for the county council, I was also able to enlist support from the clerical staff. Since the demand was mainly from market gardeners, who have rush summer periods, we closed down in November, starting again in March.

During our short eighteen weeks of work in 1940, we enrolled 160 members, worked 2,796½ hours, and handed a cheque for £45 to the Surrey Red Cross Agricultural Fund. This year, with a longer season, we hope to do much more for the Red Cross, although our main object is to help the farmer. Farms often lie some distance away, so the day's earnings may pay no more than the travelling expenses of the gangs. Like our Kent colleagues, we, too, became known, were photographed, and worked hard! The work was sometimes very backaching—chiefly weeding and thinning market garden crops, turnips, beetroots, kale, carrots and cabbage. Bean and fruit picking also occupied a good deal of time, followed later by potato lifting and pulling onions. We also dug up poultry runs and cleared and sorted the debris of bombed poultry houses. We never refused a request.

Fortunately, as the club grew and developed, the demand for its services expanded proportionately. Our system of payment is rather different from the Kent scheme. We go out in gangs of six or eight, headed by a gang leader. Two gangs may go to one farm, but the gang-leader is responsible for refunding his own gang's travelling expenses from moneys received for the day's work. The farmer pays daily for work done. The gang leader holds a log book in which is printed all relevant details—names of the gang, travelling expenses, hours worked, cash balance, and so on. The farmer initials the log book when he hands over the money, and the gang leader initials the sheet when this is handed to the treasurer. Since no two gangs are ever the same, we find this immediate refunding saves much trouble.

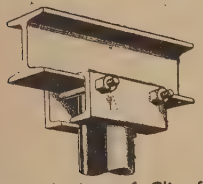
The committee meets weekly on Tuesdays, and all log sheets and monies must be handed in before the meeting. The organiser enters in the county log book the number of hours worked by each member, while the treasurer enters up general and travelling expenses enrolment subscriptions, and moneys earned. On Wednesdays, members available for the following week-end are sent postcards telling them what work they must do and where to meet. New members enrolling are sent duplicate forms, one of which they keep as a reminder of the week-end or evening they have promised to keep free for the club.

The county log book makes interesting reading. Not only are the names and addresses of each member noted, but also the evenings or week-ends that they are available for work, the kind of work undertaken, the district worked, and the number of hours they have put in. From it, the organiser can see at a glance when a member has had a long bout of weeding, and can give her a change to fruit-picking, or at least a change of surroundings.

I started the club as a small private venture, but as the scheme developed we realised that it would give the farmers more confidence if we had a president and a few vice-presidents. Our president is Mr. S. S. Boorman, J.P., chairman of the agricultural education sub-committee, whilst the vice-presidents—equivalent to Kent's honorary agricultural and horticultural advisers—include the chief executive

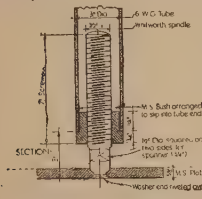
(Continued on page 114)

Special ACROW A·R·P PROPS FOR BASEMENT STRENGTHENING

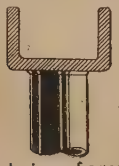


Enlarged view of Clip for securing to steel joists. The standard clip fits a 3 in. R.S.J. Clips can be supplied to fit any other R.S.J. dimensions.

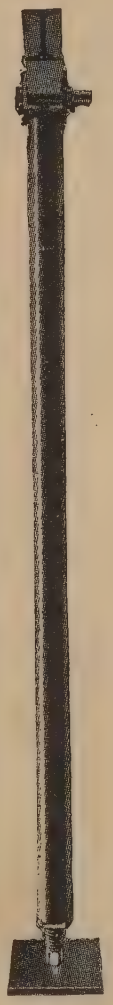
Enlarged view of Prop fitted with special 6 in. × 6 in. flat Headplate.



Enlarged view of Steel Base with 5 in. screw adjustment.



Enlarged view of prop fitted with special Stirrup Head to take timber beams. Stirrup heads can be made to take any size of beam.
Complete Prop with 3 in. O.D. tube, 6-gauge, made specially for A.R.P. purposes.



● Easily handled, compactly stored and rapidly erected. ● One spanner only necessary. ● The number of Props required in order to comply with the Home Office recommendations depends on the conditions governing each case. It is usual, however, to space the Props to hold the estimated debris load of 400 lbs. per square foot. If required, our advice in this connection will gladly be given. ● Where solid reinforced concrete floors have to be strengthened, special Props with flat top plates for distributing shock load are available. ● ALL NECESSARY MATERIALS IN STOCK.

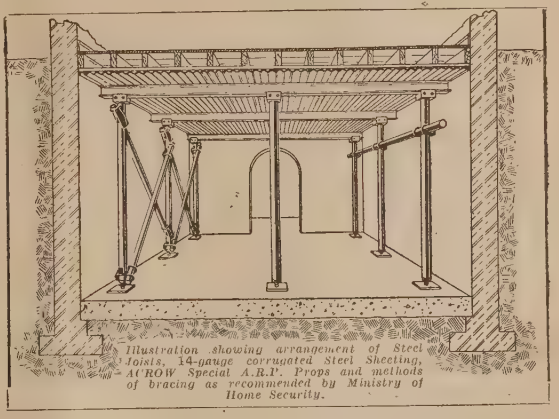
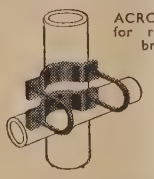


Illustration showing arrangement of Steel Joists, 14-gauge corrugated Steel Sheeting, ACROW Special A.R.P. Props and methods of bracing as recommended by Ministry of Home Security.

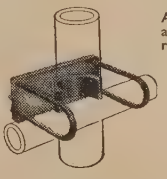
Extract from Home Security Circular No. 290/1940, Air Raid Shelters.

"The use of the ordinary tubular struts, originally designed for domestic basements, has now been approved for the strutting of larger public shelters, but in some cases too little attention has been paid to the bracing of these struts when so used. The point cannot be over-emphasised in the light of recent experience that when such struts have been used and there are more than four of them in any line, adequate bracing must be effected. It is also desirable to fix the baseplates to the floor, either with say, bolts or by enclosing the bases in concrete footings. **All such shelters should be immediately examined with this in view."**

ACROW BRACING CLIPS are available in two types.—(A) for right angle bracing and (B) for bracing at any angle, right angle or diagonal. Both types accommodate a 3" diam. vertical prop and 2" diam. bracing tube.



ACROW Clips for right-angle bracing.



ACROW Adjustable Clip set for right-angle bracing.

ACROW Adjustable Clip as used for diagonal bracing.

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57-64

(Continued from page 112)

officer under the war agricultural executive committee and the chairman of the county committee of the women's land army.

It would be interesting to know how many other counties are running similar clubs—not necessarily restricted to local government officers—and how they are doing the job. Such information might encourage this useful work and inspire more N A L G O members to embark on it.

MARGARET J. CARTER, B.Sc., N.D.P.
Surbiton

PENSIONS BEFORE 65

Solving a Post-war Problem

ONE of the problems to be faced after the war will be the return of the men from the Forces to civilian life. The local government service will be called upon to help in solving this great rehabilitation, and it seems to me that part of the difficulty will have to be met by the provision of pensions and superannuation at an earlier age than 65.

No doubt many of the elderly men who are at present bearing a heavy burden will be ready to retire at 60, or between that age and 65, and I would suggest that N A L G O's policy should be

(*a*) To obtain through legislation a higher fraction than 1-120 for non-contributory service, and

(*b*) That men who voluntarily retire before 65 should have the years between the age of retirement and 65 counted as contributory service for superannuation purposes.

In consideration of the sacrifice of such years of full salary, this appears to be an equitable and feasible proposition towards the solution of what will be a difficult social adjustment.

REGULATOR

HANDLING THE RATEPAYER

"Be a Civil Servant"

IN some respects, Mr. Vickery is justified in criticising, in his article "Why does the public hate us so?" in your March number, the behaviour of those officials whose duties include the interviewing of ratepayers.

Most ratepayers come to the office seeking an answer to their problems, and they are entitled to treatment which merits our status of "civil servants." It is a pity that the study of human and business relationships is not included in the training of the local government officer. A glance at one of Dale Carnegie's books will lay bare our ignorance of this vital subject.

Let the other man talk himself out of his bad temper, let him get his grievance off his chest—perhaps you are the only person who will listen to him. Never tell a man that he is wrong, even if you know that he is—there are plenty of fools who can do that. Agree with your visitor on every possible point.

As Mr. Vickery suggests, many counter officials, when confronted with an argument on rating law, would call upon their admittedly greater knowledge, and proceed to cut the ratepayer's case to pieces. Maybe. But the ratepayer is going to go away smarting more than ever, and that is not our object.

We should make it a golden rule that, at whatever cost to our feelings, any ratepayer who enters our company should leave it with a smile, a knowledge that his problem has been solved, or amicably convinced that the rating authority has done its best for him.

There is, however, one class of ratepayer which should be treated firmly. I refer to those lawyers, accountants, and other professional men who think that the whole law and practice of rating is something that they thoroughly grasped over breakfast. Many air their knowledge or reveal the lack of it (a solicitor recently asked for an assessment to be reduced to R.V. £16 10s. 0d.) and treat the officer as one of their own office-boys. They usually take good care not to notice you in the street.

I feel that there is no harm done in pitting your knowledge against these human pillars of wisdom, and making them aware that you know your subject. You will obtain respect by this method just as, by avoiding it, you

will be respected by the less learned ratepayer.

So, fellow interviewers, let us learn to see the ratepayer's point of view, make him feel that you are there solely to help him, and work hard for that smile of appreciation and thanks which you should value as highly as the contents of our own pay-envelope.

F. R.-V. R.

CLERKS TO SMALL COUNCILS

Why Insist on Solicitors?

A RECENT advertisement inviting solicitors to apply for the position of town clerk at St. Ives, at a salary of £450, plus the usual fees for elections and an honorarium of £50 as food executive officer (if appointed to that post), raises a number of questions. The two most important are:

Are the services of a solicitor necessary to small authorities?

If so (though I do not admit it), can an authority expect to get a suitable officer for the salary offered?

I believe that no authority with a population of less than 20,000 (possibly 25,000) need insist upon legal qualifications; certainly, it is quite unnecessary for towns of 12,000 or less. The second question can be answered by experience only; some candidates may be satisfactory, others the reverse.

It is unfortunately true of local government that, whilst chief officers of ability will prove their worth, others, who may be incompetent, will hold their appointments because they have an able staff, and rarely are they discovered owing to the extraordinarily staunch manner in which local government staffs stick together.

There are in the service today a large number of officers who, by virtue of experience and a self-taught knowledge of local government law and administration, are indisputably competent to take up town and other council clerkships and to carry out the duties with every credit.

Unless the increasing tendency to insist upon applicants for these appointments being solicitors is checked, there will be an ever-growing number of assistant and deputy clerks who, despite their abilities, can never rise to a salary much beyond one-third of that received by their chiefs. Can anything more dishearten a man than the knowledge that a probably unclimbable barrier is placed in front of what he should reasonably expect to be his goal?

Except in those few places where the solicitor-clerk is paid extra fees for legal work—which naturally induces him to make such work—few authorities with fewer than 12,000 inhabitants are likely to spend more than £50 a year for such work. This being so, all possible steps should be taken to help councils to appreciate that, far from losing anything by not requiring this qualification from candidates for the plums of the profession, they stand to gain the services of officers who will carry out the duties with the greatest possible credit.

On the few occasions when a solicitor is essential, let the council pay one for the work required: when a town clerk is needed, why bar men who have made the work their career?

W.

IS WOMEN'S WORK INFERIOR?

An "Extravagant Generalisation"

I DISAGREE with Mr. Forster's extravagant generalisation that the work of the "average" woman is inferior to that of the "average" man.

Pursuance of this theory would lead to jealousy and friction between female and male employees, to the detriment of both and—as is usual with any divisions amongst workpeople—to the benefit of the employers.

N A L G O should continue to support the principle of equal pay for equal work, and not allow itself to waste time on this long-standing controversy of payment according to sex. Many of the vital aims and objects of the association are not yet achieved; we need the viewpoint and help of our women members in the struggle for their attainment.

St. Pancras. H. J. MILLICHAP.

"Preposterous Assertion"

MR. R. C. FORSTER apparently expects us to accept without question the preposterous assertion, in his letter in your March number, that, while women are pre-eminent in the domestic sphere, "in all other walks of life, whether as artisan, professional worker, cook, dress designer, clerk or, what not, the work of the *average* woman is inferior to that of the *average* man"; he has not troubled to offer any evidence in support of it. Such temerity is astounding.

He also states that "the greater human responsibilities of the average man enter into the determination of the reward of labour." Why does he not say plainly, "The greater human responsibilities of the married man"—which is what he obviously means?

This argument for higher wages because of responsibilities could be used to support the case for differential wage rates as between married and single men and married men with large families.

Another of the dogmatic and unreasoned statements with which his letter is filled is the assertion that "it is upon the average worker that wage scales are based." This may be true within certain narrow limits of piece-work rates, but surely the demand for the supply of labour and the relative bargaining strength of workers' and employers' organisations have something to do with it.

E. M. A. LLIN (Miss).
70, Gnoll Park Road,
Neath, Glam.

(Continued on page 116)

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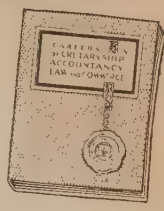

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(Continued from page 114)

An Unjust Distinction

WHY do so many councils pay their juniors at a different rate according to sex? Such a differentiation at the ages of 15 or 16, when financial responsibilities (if any) must be the same for both sexes, is not only absurd and unjust, but must have an exceedingly bad psychological effect on the boys and girls concerned.

Holborn. E. M. F.

WAR SERVICE PAY

More Vital Than Bonus

AS another N.A.L.G.O. member in H.M. Forces, I endorse the opinions of Cpl. Burns in his letter in your March number.

If members still in their civilian occupations were paid at the same rates as those in the Forces, they would realise the difficult position of the service man's wife, and thus put more sincerity and enthusiasm into their requests to local authorities for the making up of war pay. I am a sapper in the Royal Engineers, and therefore know something of the hardships.

The war pay problem should be tackled *first*, and the bonus question shelved until it has been settled satisfactorily. Bonus claims should not interfere with the association's demands for better war service pay.

In reply to "A Yorkshire Tyke" in the same issue, I claim that there *is* a bigger problem than unpaid overtime, and that is war service pay. Everybody today should be putting all he has into the struggle, not quibbling about being paid for time worked over and above normal hours, so long as his salary is sufficient to give him a decent standard of living.

C. V. SHOESMITH.
(Guildford branch.)

Unreasonable Overtime

I THOROUGHLY endorse the views of "A Yorkshire Tyke" on the overtime question. The scandal of giving away one's time and labour for nothing has persisted too long in our service. I have never heard of any private firm expecting it, without some reward. Some councils promise time off in lieu, but finding an opportunity to get it is often a problem. Some officials would have their staffs working until supper-time. I've had some! My boss has been out most of a nice sunny day, and returns as fresh as a daisy near to "knocking off" time (when I am feeling weary) and says; "Jones, I have some letters requiring attention." Billy Muggins gets away about 6.30, and arrives home to a sea of anxious faces.

I am also up against the "full of importance" people, who hang about the office after 5.30 so that the boss shall imagine they are "good chaps." Fearing that I shall be left out of the annual salary increases list, I have to do the same. N.A.L.G.O. must fight to end overtime, or get justice for those who are "expected" to give up their recreation almost every evening of the week. I am always willing to serve in an emergency, but I fail to see reason in stopping behind for the sake of it.

SURREYITE.

ARE MEMBERS TIMID

Too Many Pseudonyms?

I HAVE been pained to observe the large number of letters which have appeared in Readers' Forum bearing pseudonyms. Why are there so many timid or bashful members of our association? Surely a man (or woman) need have no qualms about backing his views in the magazine devoted to his service with his name. The ebullitions of some of our timid brethren are worthy to be classed with those of "Ratepayer," "Pro Bono Publico," and "Father of Ten" which still, despite paper shortage, defile our daily press.

grouse now, sir. I notice that the Black List is discontinued. Could you not keep it alive and cast out some of the anonymous letters? 20, Ghyllwood Drive, Bingley.

G. F. R. DICKINSON.

We permit the use of pseudonyms because we recognise that, sometimes, an officer cannot express himself freely if he has to reveal his name and authority. But every letter must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, as a guarantee of good faith; anonymous letters are not published.

NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

Military

KILLED.

Beevers, Cpl. K., Cameron Highlanders, cleansing dept., Dewsbury. Killed on active service.

Connelly, Pte. D. M., R.C.S., electricity works, Barnes. Killed on active service.

Fox, Sergt. W., R.A.F., market superintendent's office, Stockton-on-Tees. Killed in action.

Golley, Lt. A. E., R.A.O.C., deputy county treasurer, Wiltshire. Died as result of motor-cycle accident.

Hallaran, Cmdr. C. F., R.N., baths superintendent, Hampstead. Died in attempt at rescue at sea.

Monk, Cpl. E., A.M.P.C., 25, St. Albans R.D.C.

Warren, Sergt. Pilot R., R.A.F., county treasurer's dept., Bedford. Killed on active service.

MISSING.

Brockway, Sergt. R. C., R.A.F., town clerk's dept., Folkestone.

Hemingway, Pte. R., R.A.P.C., highways dept., Dewsbury. Missing since Dunkirk.

Hicks, L.N.A., F. F., Fleet Air Arm, borough treasurer's dept., Bacup.

Tingey, Pilot Officer E. A., R.A.F., electricity dept., Hackney. Reported missing, believed killed.

PRISONER OF WAR.

Davey, Pte. J., R.C.S., electricity works, Barnes.

Civilian.

KILLED (in Air Raids).

Bell, R. K., senior assistant registrar, Hillhead, Glasgow.

Bennett, A. E., deputy chief water inspector, Croydon.

Darling, Miss Jean, housing manager, Chelsea. Killed whilst serving as volunteer air raid warden.

Morrison, R. (A.F.S.), city chamberlain's dept., Glasgow.

Phillips, F. W., city treasurer's dept., Carlisle.

Wonfer, S., water inspector, Hythe, Folkestone.

Young, W. S., assistant registrar, Hillhead, Glasgow.

AWARDS TO MEMBERS

WE are proud to record this month the award of four more George Medals, and one British Empire Medal to members of N.A.L.G.O. engaged on civil defence duties, and of the Distinguished Flying Cross to a member in the R.A.F. They are:

GEORGE MEDAL.

C. D. Bruce, town planning dept., Bristol, in recognition of outstanding courage in the examination of unexploded bombs.

R. N. Hateley, 36, superintendent of the Pleck works of Walsall corporation gas dept. When a gasholder was hit by bombs, Mr. Hateley climbed to the top to seal holes through which burning gas was issuing, despite the fact that an unexploded bomb was lying close by. Two other men who assisted in the work, Mr. F. Thickett, foreman at the gas works, and section officer T. Pearson, A.F.S., also received awards, the former the George Medal, and the latter the British Empire Medal.

O. E. Parsloe, works superintendent, Bromley—in recognition of outstanding courage in releasing people trapped under debris.

J. E. Stanier, deputy gas engineer, Stoke-on-Trent. When incendiary bombs pierced three gasholders, igniting the gas, Mr. Stanier climbed to the top and, despite a severely burned arm, worked for 1½ hours, while high-explosive bombs were still falling, to seal the holes. The danger and difficulty of the task were increased by the fact that the gasholders were covered with ice, and the clay used for sealing froze.

BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL.

J. S. Warrilow, engineering assistant, Stoke-on-Trent—for outstanding courage in assisting Mr. Stanier as described above.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

Sgt. Pilot Ronald Purnell, R.A.F., Wiltshire C.C. Awarded for bravery in bombing operations over Brest, in which he was slightly wounded in both legs.

W. H. R. Pullinger—An Appreciation

Although Mr. W. H. R. Pullinger left the service in 1924, there are many old colleagues who have happy memories of association with him, and will hear of his passing on April 7, at the age of 81 with very sincere regret. The "appreciation" in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE on his retirement was headed "A Good Comrade," and none has been more deserving of the title. His election as an honorary member at that time was a recognition of his valuable work for the Association.

Mr. Pullinger, who was one of the original six members present when N.A.L.G.O. was formed in 1905, was a prominent member of the national executive council for many years, and throughout his long service at Poplar, where he was chief rate collector, devoted himself to the interests of local government officers. On his retirement to Southgate he became a member of the urban district council, was chairman from 1928-1930, mayor of the newly-formed borough in 1934-5; and an alderman until his death.

He was largely instrumental in securing superannuation for Poplar in 1911, and was deservedly proud of the part he took in securing the Act of 1922. He lived to see the crowning of his work in the compulsory measure adopted in 1937.

Limitations of space prevent more than mention of his work as chairman of the Metropolitan district committee and the London district Whitley council, member of the first national Whitley council, president of the Association of Rate Collectors and Assistant Overseers (now Rating and Valuation Officers) and in many other spheres.

At the funeral service at Christ Church, Southgate, the vicar, the Rev. G. W. Stainsby, referred to Mr. Pullinger as a steward who had used his many talents to the full, and all who knew him will agree that the tribute was richly deserved.

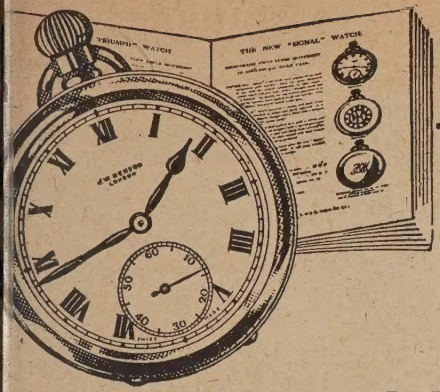
With our sense of gratitude will go feelings of deep sympathy for Mrs. Pullinger and her family. In their sorrow, however, they must be proud of the esteem in which Mr. Pullinger was held, and the achievements that were his.

J. T. B.

"His Name Will Live"

In a letter to Mrs. Pullinger, on behalf of the national executive council, the general secretary wrote:

"His memory will last as long as N.A.L.G.O.—it is always the case that the names of the pioneers live longer than those who reap the benefit of their work. You have our deepest sympathy. Many thousands of local government officers are sharing your grief."



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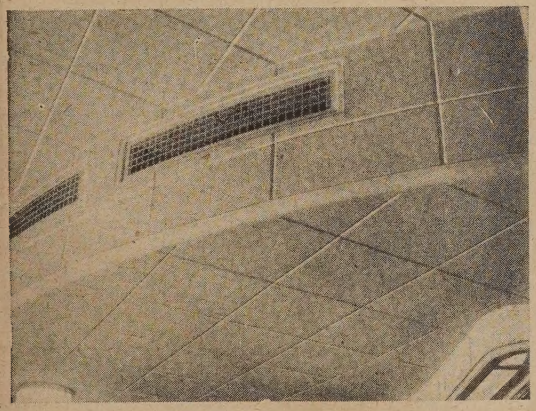

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SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS

NORTH-WESTERN AND N. WALES

Wigan C.B. has adopted the Lancashire and Cheshire provincial council general division (female) scales, and P.T. and A. grades (female) from February, 1941.

Accrington B., after protracted negotiations, has adopted from April, 1941, the junior and general division (male and female) scales of the Lancashire and Cheshire provincial council in full. The effect of the decision is that the male junior and general division scale has been fixed at the maximum of £190 at 26, and the female junior and general division scale at the maximum of 55s. p.w. at 26. In addition, the council has adopted section A. of the female clerical division scale. This scale will, however, be applied only to one assistant in each department who is recommended by the head of the department as carrying out confidential duties, the recommendation to be approved by the council.

NORTH-EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE

Batley B. has revised the salaries scales applicable to junior and general grades (males) as follows :

Juniors : £45 (at 16)+£10 (2)+£15 (2)+£20 (1)—£115 (at 21).

General Grade : £130 (at 22)+£15 (4)—£190 (at 26).

York C.B. has adopted the following revised scales of salaries for **Juniors** and Second Class Clerks :

Male : £50 (at 16)+£10 (1)+£15 (4)+£10 (2)—£140 (at 23).

Female : 50 (at 16)+£10 (1)+£15 (4)+£6 (2)—£132 (at 23).

Grade 2

Male : £150+£10 (6)—£210.

Female : £138+£6 (5)—£168.

This revision is a war time measure only, introduced to overcome the difficulty experienced in recruiting temporary staffs on the former scale, and will apply to permanent and temporary employees.

MIDLANDS AND S. WALES REGION

Derby C.B. has substituted the following for the existing scales for junior and Grade 3 men, and for women clerical staff :

Men

Junior : £55 (at 16)+£10 (1)+£15 (3)—£110 (at 20) (£5 p.a. more to those with examination qualification.)

Grade 3 : £140+£15 (4)—+£200.

Women

Junior : £55 (at 16)+£10 (4)—£95 (at 20).

Grade 2 : £105+£15 (1)+£10 (2)—£140.

Grade 1 : £150+£10 (3)—£180.

Lincoln C.B. has introduced the following revised scales of salaries for men junior clerks and women shorthand-typists, to operate for the duration of the war :

Men

Grade A : £70 (at 16)+£10 (1)+£15 (2)+£23 (2)—£156.

On reaching the maximum of Grace A, a junior automatically enters Grade B, proceeding to a maximum of £200 by appropriate increments.

Women

Grade A : £60 (at 16)+15 (2)+10 (3)—£120 (at 21).

Grade B : £120+£10 (2)—£140.

Grade C : £135+£15 (1)—£150.

Grade D : £130+£10 (3)—£160.

Hucknall U.D.C. has adopted the following scales :

Juniors : £32 10s. (at 14)+£10 (1)+£12 10s. (1)+£10 (2)+£15 (2)—£105 (at 20).

Men

£120+£15 (6)—£210.

£169+£15 (6)—£259.

£240+£15 (6)—£330.

Women

£120+£15 (2)—£150.

£169+£15 (1)—£184.

Darlaston U.D.C. has adopted the junior and Grade A scales of scale I of the West Midlands provincial council.

The boroughs of **Evesham** and **Stratford-on-Avon** have joined the West Midlands provincial council.

SOUTHERN REGION.

Somerset C.C. has amended its salary scales to provide for :

Boys and girls : first year, £70 ; second year, £90.

Women clerks and typists :

Grade IV—£100+£8(5)—£140.

Grade III—£150+£10(4)—£190 (plus £10 merit increment after three years on maximum and £5 two years later).

Grade II—£200+£12(5)—£260.

Grade I—£266+£12—£360.

Gloucester C.C. has improved its salary scales by amalgamating junior grades to give progression from £52 to £182 p.a.

Bridport B. has granted increases to two chief clerks and established a grade for chief clerks on the application of the divisional officer.

Newport B. has adopted the salary scales recommended by the Isle of Wight joint Whitley council :

Probationers—£42+£10—£52.

Grade A—£52+£12½—£150.

Grade B—£150+£12½—£240.

Grade C—£240+£15—£320.

Grade D—£320+£15—£400.

The South-Western provincial council has prepared suitable scales of salaries which will form the basis of recommendations to all local authorities in the counties of Gloucester, Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall.

Nalgo Provident Society

When the executive committee of the NALGO Provident Society met at Leeds on March 14, it was reported that, during the year ended February 25, membership of the sickness scheme had increased from 20,174 to 20,324 ; of the death benefit scheme from 1,581 to 1,614 ; of the hospital and nursing home scheme from 7,450 to 7,883 ; and of the funeral benefit for children scheme from 68 to 155. The number of members enrolled under the sickness insurance and simple endowment scheme for women since January 1 was 23.

It was decided to allocate 7d. in the shilling to members' "Rest" accounts for 1940. This is less than in previous years owing to the severe sickness epidemic—the worst in history of the society—in the first three months of the year.

The funds of the death benefit scheme (table II) and of the hospital and nursing home scheme (table III) have been valued for the (third) and (first) quinquennial period ended December 31, 1940, respectively, and the valuation reports of the society's consulting actuaries were submitted for consideration. The executive committee decided :

(1) Death Benefit Scheme (Table II).—To recommend the committee of management to declare a bonus of £1 per cent. per annum to be added to each assurance in force at December 31, 1940, for each completed year within the quinquennial valuation period, subject to the approval of the society's consulting actuaries and the Registrar of Friendly Societies.

Hospital and Nursing Home Scheme (Table III).—That since the valuation shows only a small surplus, the committee of management be recommended to continue the present rates of contribution and benefits.

NALGO ADDRESSES

To avoid delay, members are asked to address correspondence as follows :

On all subjects except ancillaries, in the first place to the appropriate district office :

SOUTHERN REGION

Regional Officer (and Metropolitan district) : **T. M. Kershaw,** 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGware 2025).

Divisional Officer (Eastern and South-Eastern districts) : **J. Melvin,** 54, New Street, Chelmsford (Chelmsford 4347).

Divisional Officer (Southern and South Western districts) : **N. M. Woodcock,** 16, The Crescent, Taunton (Taunton 2779).

E. and W. MIDLANDS AND S. WALES REGION

Regional Officer (and E. and W. Midland district) : **J. E. N. Davis,** 14, Earlsbury Gardens, Birchfields, Birmingham 20 (Birchfields 5123).

Divisional Officer (S. Wales, and Monmouthshire districts,) : **A. H. Geary,** 11, Park Place, Cardiff (Cardiff 1646).

NORTH-WESTERN DISTRICT

Divisional Secretary : **Haden Corser,** 2, Mount Street, Manchester 2 (Blackfriars 7668).

NORTH-EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE DISTRICTS

Divisional Secretary : **W. Cecil Wood,** 12, East Parade, Leeds (Leeds 24861).

SCOTTISH DISTRICT

Divisional Secretary : **J. M. Mortimer,** 67, West Nile Street, Glasgow, C.1 (Douglas 0404).

Relating to **NALGO** *ancillaries and the* ***supply and delivery of "Local Government Service"*** *to*

The General Secretary, NALGO, Croyde, Braunton, North Devon (Croyde 212).

Relating to ***Public Relations*** *and* ***"Local Government Service" (editorial),*** *to*

The Public Relations Officer, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGware 2025).

Relating to ***"Local Government Service" advertisements,*** *to*

A. Darby's Advertising Agency, Cobham House, 24, Blackfriars Lane, London, E.C.4 (City 6686).

LONDON OFFICE

The General Secretary, 27, Abingdon Street, Westminister, S.W.1, Telephone and Telegrams WHitehall 9351.

Congratulations to—

Oswestry branch, on holding a successful social evening very soon after its formation.

Mr. C. B. Hearn, secretary of the Clacton and district branch and a member of the Eastern district committee, on his appointment as acting clerk to Clacton U.D.C., in succession to Mr. G. T. Lewis, first president of the branch, on his retirement after 42 years as clerk to the council.

The following branches which have made donations to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund :

Consett—£4 4s. from branch funds.

Darlington—£25, profit from dances and concerts during the winter.

Prudhoe Hall Colony—£15 10s. 6d., profit from a dance.

Seaton Valley—£10 from branch funds.

Scarborough—£20, saved on the allocation for conference expenses.

Sheffield—£75 raised by voluntary contributions, making a total of £160 since last October.

Wetherby—£5 5s. from branch funds.

SCOTTISH NOTES

THE Registrar General for Scotland attended a meeting of the Scottish joint industrial council held in Edinburgh on March 20, when a memorandum on the grading and grouping of full time registrars was considered. It was decided to ask the Registrar-General to look further into the grouping of registration districts suggested by NALGO, and to give the council his views.

Cost of Living Bonus

Meeting on April 18, the Scottish Whitley council decided, after a long discussion, to approve revision of the bonus award to give 10 per cent on the first £250 of salary, 6 per cent on the next £50, and 3 per cent on any balance between £300 and £350, provided that salary and bonus together shall not exceed £360. This decision was accepted with great reluctance by the staff side, which had pressed for the free English award, but it was impossible to get the other side to go beyond it.

Port Glasgow Dispute

In an attempt to reach a settlement in our dispute with **Port Glasgow** town council on salary scales and war bonus, there was a meeting of representatives of the council and of the association, at which Mr. Fraser, an officer of the Ministry of Labour, presided. After Mr. Mortimer, on behalf of Port Glasgow staffs, had stated their claims and outlined the history of the negotiations, the Provost explained the attitude of the council. Despite prolonged discussion, however, a settlement could not be reached, and it was finally agreed to remit the question to the Industrial Court for arbitration.

Glasgow "Serfdom"

In the March journal, we commented on an amazing decision of Glasgow Corporation, under rules adopted for superannuation purposes, to refuse to release an officer wishing to take up a better appointment with the Assistance Board. On April 7, the divisional secretary interviewed the staffing committee on the subject. He argued that the regulations, which had now been in force or five years, had always been regarded as merely administrative ; that no local authority had previously refused consent to an officer's transfer ; and that the authority had no right to stand in the way of a man's advancement or to bind him to its service against his will. The corporation's case was that, out of a staff of some 400, it had already released 36 men and was determined to release no more. The finding of the staffing committee will, it is hoped, be challenged at a meeting of the full council.

Scottish Council

When the emergency committee of the Scottish council met in Edinburgh on March 22, Mr. H. D. Ferguson, convener of the law and parliamentary committee, reported on legal action taken regarding : (1) the case of a town clerk ; (2) a complicated superannuation case ; and (3) a dispute with Airdrie town council. The committee approved of the action taken. In the case of the town clerk, a favourable settlement has now been reached.

Mr. J. Brown and Mr. R. Adams, two of our representatives on the National Executive Council, reported on the meeting at Leeds on March 15, and it was agreed to summon a meeting of the Scottish Council on April 26 to consider the N.E.C. statement on affiliation to the T.U.C.

Hospitality for Warriors

For the benefit of members in the Forces, we give below a list of branches which have offered their hospitality, together with the names of officers with whom contact should be made :

Ashton-under-Lyne.—W. B. BRADLEY, Electricity Works, Ashton-under-Lyne (use of Waterworks' Social Club offered).

Blackburn NALGO Sports and Social Club.—J. COX, 42, Victoria Street, Blackburn.

Cambridgeshire.—LEO MASON, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

Cheshire County.—H. JONES, 47, Walter Street, Chester.

Chester.—J. COLLINSON, City Treasurer's Dept., 43, Northgate Street, Chester.

Enfield.—Miss W. STITTLE, Public Offices, Enfield.

Essex Rivers Catchment Board.—L. E. INNES, Essex Rivers House, Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

Grimsby.—J. W. L. BUXTON, Borough Treasurer's Dept., Victoria Street, Grimsby. (Grimsby 1645.)

Hinckley, Leicestershire.—J. G. S. TOMKINS, 16, Station Road, Hinckley.

Isle of Wight.—S. H. MATTHEWS, County Hall, Newport, I.O.W.

Leicester.—J. HILL, City Water Offices, Bowling Green Street, Leicester.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.—V. GRAINGER, Town Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1.

Skegness NALGO Social Club.—A. J. DAVIS, Town Hall, Rowan Bank, Skegness.

Winchester.—R. G. CASTLE, Guildhall.

A London Rendezvous

THE need for a local government club in London, where officers visiting the capital on business or pleasure might be sure of a bed and an opportunity of meeting colleagues from other towns, long felt, is more acute than ever today, when some of the most popular hotels have been taken over by the Government, and others have been damaged. In normal times, this might have been a useful enterprise for NALGO. That being impossible today, a letter sent to branches recently by Lord Meston, chairman of the general committee of the National Liberal Club, offers an excellent alternative.

The club, Lord Meston points out, occupies magnificent premises near Charing Cross and adjacent to the Whitehall Ministries and the Houses of Parliament. There is a library of 30,000 volumes, all Parliamentary papers and reports, and all the reference books.

The annual subscription is eight guineas for town and four for country members, and bedrooms are available at prices ranging from 7s. to 10s. a night. The general secretary of NALGO, who is a member, is prepared to nominate any NALGO member wishing to take advantage of this offer.

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If it is your desire to make progress and establish yourself in a good reer, write to us for free particulars on any subject which interests you, if your career is undecided, write and tell us of your likes and dislikes, d we will give you practical advice as to the possibilities of a vocation d how to succeed in it. You will be under no obligation whatever. is our pleasure to help. We never take students for courses unless feel satisfied they are suitable. Do not forget that success is not the erogative of the brilliant. Our experience of over years proves that the *will to succeed* achieves ore than outstanding brilliancy.

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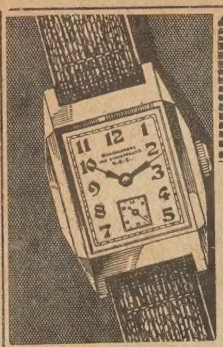

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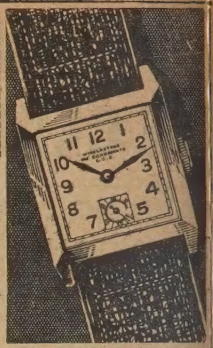

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